

2012 to 2015 Eckhart Tolle TV Part 5

[Speaker 1] (0:00 - 9:49)

Reserved, I don't know if that's going to work here for people who don't want to engage in social interactions and that's fine, that's good. Others may prefer to engage in social interaction. Who knows, you might meet somebody, but be careful with the habitual patterns of your mind that can become stimulated when you engage in conversation and then you can easily lose presence, especially when you start discussing things or expressing your opinions, where very quickly an identification with viewpoints can come into your mind, which is ego.

A viewpoint is a thought pattern or a thought. And as you talk to other people, you may find that their view or opinion is different from yours. And then you get into, you notice the energy arising and you defend your opinion, not knowing that it's just an opinion.

You think you're defending your very identity, that's unconscious. So be careful when you discuss things so that you don't lose presence. The wonderful practice is to look at another human when he or she is talking.

And while you listen, feel your inner body. We all are to some extent familiar with that. Feel your inner, the aliveness inside your body as you look at that other person and as you listen to the other person so that you don't need to comment mentally on what the other person is saying.

Allow the other person to fully express his or her viewpoint or opinion or whatever they have to say and be there as a presence. So be alert and still and listen. See if you can listen from that place of alert stillness.

So you look at them and you listen. They talk and you're still and alert. It's beautiful.

And then at first, it may be a little strange because you might think I won't be able to know what to say, but you do, you will find. Words too will come afterwards, but be careful that you don't get drawn back into your habitual patterns. So that's a presence practice while you interact with people.

Opinions are amazing. Amazing things can be huge obstacles if you're identified with them. Identified means your identity is bound up with your opinions.

And if you look on the internet, how worked up these people get, and so angry and irritated, and what's happened to them, they're completely identified with their viewpoints or opinions. Their whole sense of self is in it. And anybody who disagrees is the enemy.

And they love complaining. So we watch out for opinions. The Buddha already talked,

there's a sutra of the Buddha about the beware of opinions, the thicket of opinions, the jungle of opinions.

Now, does that mean you can't have an opinion anymore? No, of course you can still have your viewpoints, perfectly fine, about politics, about social issues, about psychological things, whatever. You can have opinions, but is your identity bound up with them, or is it simply do you recognize it as a viewpoint, an opinion, without having to defend it as if it were your very life?

It's not your life. It's an abstraction in the head. Also, I recommend that from time to time, you take, even if you have come with a friend or a family member, that you spend certain periods of time by yourself where you're not with anybody.

Take some time away from other people where you just walk to the beach, walk around here, walk along the beach, a magnificent beach. You can walk for miles. I wouldn't say go swimming because it looks quite, the currents are probably quite strong, so we don't want that.

But walk along the beach and, or up the little mountain here, or walk around here by yourself. And as you walk by yourself, be the observing presence, be alert, and you go. And so sometimes you stop, you might sit somewhere and look around, notice the little things, the sky, and after a while, and we'll be going more deeply into this later, just a brief mention here.

After a while, you notice, you notice not only what you are noticing, you notice also your noticing. So you not only notice the things that you notice, you notice the noticing, which means you have become aware that you are aware. You can feel the awareness without which you wouldn't be able to see or perceive anything.

And that's the, that is the new consciousness when you can feel, sense yourself as the awareness. You're aware that you are aware. And as I'm saying this now, don't wait for it to happen.

Right now, can you be aware at this moment of the fact that you are aware? It has no shape or form. Awareness has no shape or form.

It's formless, but it is an enormous presence that gives rise to the entire world, the experience of the world, that is prior to the experience of the world. And from there, you look around. So you're now, you've gone deeper than the surface reality and still appreciate the surface reality.

That's who you are. You are the consciousness that underlies phenomenal existence. You're not a person. You're temporarily, that consciousness takes on the form of a person, physical and psychological form.

It's a temporary formation. And it, that temporary formation may not even end or will not end when the physical body goes. That formation may have a life that continues for a while, but it is a formation, a form identity.

The essence of who you are is formless. It's consciousness. And what is consciousness?

You could ask. And all I can say right now is a little metaphor or analogy, rather, consciousness is the, it's like the light that comes from the sun. And then you may ask, what's the sun?

But I won't answer that. You will find that for yourself.

[Speaker 8] (12:37 - 13:52)

Thank you. Hello. I want to ask, I work with people and I notice, I work with people and talk about lifestyle change quite a lot and how it will relate to health.

And I notice in myself, as well as in those people that I work with, that sometimes in the face of really clear experience that making a certain health choice will make them better. And in sometimes serious situations, like say they've got diabetes or something. And I just want to make this distinct from things that we know that are addictions like smoking.

So I'm not talking about that, cause that's an addiction and that's got a different force. But sometimes people, for example, they'll go on a gluten-free diet, say, and they'll be much better for three months and then they'll come back and then they've started to lose that momentum, lose motivation and they're drifting back into the diet that doesn't suit so well. What is that force?

What is that in us, in me too, where I know that, for example, if I go to bed earlier, I'll feel better in the next day, but something in me sort of says, no, I don't want to go to bed early.

[Speaker 1] (13:53 - 13:53)

No.

[Speaker 8] (13:55 - 13:56)

What is that?

[Speaker 1] (13:57 - 24:55)

Yes. So there is a, these are forms of conditioning that has inertia and a certain momentum in certain ways in which people live that have been there for many, many years. They could also almost be seen as energy streams inside you and they have a

certain momentum.

And some of these are sluggish energies, the inertia, the pull of gravity, gravitational force of deep seated habits that are associated with the person. It's part of conditioning, mental, emotional conditioning. So then the motivation goes away again.

And sometimes it's only in a crisis situation that people are able to break out of it. And sometimes not even then. If they really realize it's a crisis situation, then sometimes that can be the trigger that pushes people out of that, the gravitational pull of deep seated conditioned habits.

So there's also a reluctance because these things are associated with the egoic sense of identity. There's also reluctance sometimes to abandon these habits because it's almost as if you were abandoning a part of yourself and people don't want to die. The ego doesn't want to die.

So often the ego is stuck in unhealthy habits, but it's become so much of their sense of self that they can't do anything about it and they don't want to. So all you can do is explain what it is that they are doing and what there's only that much that you can do for somebody else. You cannot force them to evolve.

You can only provide the triggers for their evolution. So, and there are humans who don't want to evolve. They're not ready yet.

It's like an apple that's on the tree and it might be close to getting ripe, but it doesn't, or it might be, it doesn't want to fall. It was just clinged. Or let's say another example, the caterpillar says, no, I don't want to become a butterfly.

I know who I am and I'm comfortable with who I am. Why do you want me to become a butterfly? I don't fly around in the air, I belong here.

And then it munches, this is where I belong. And no matter how much you talk to the caterpillar, you have to wait until finally the caterpillars, when it gets close to the transformation or metamorphosis, then the caterpillar experiences life becoming quite unpleasant. He cannot be a caterpillar anymore and he can't even crawl anymore and something is very wrong suddenly.

And it's only when life becomes totally unbearable for the caterpillar, then finally he gives in and says, okay, I can't stand this anymore. I'd rather be a butterfly. And so humans are a bit like that.

And some are ready. Some need more suffering before they are ready. That's the unfortunate truth.

And not all not necessarily physical suffering. It can also be self-generated mental and

emotional suffering. Some people are not ready to give up their self-generated mental, emotional suffering.

They're just not ready. They may come to you and say, help me, help me. But when it comes to the moment where they could be free, as happened to me years ago when I was still working with individual people, I was pointing out to a lady who came who had a terrible irritation with her husband.

For years, the very presence of her husband caused intense irritation. And everything her husband said and did, everything, the way he moved, the way he sat, the way he ate his food, I can't stand him. And so I explained or attempted to explain these in the early stages of, before any books were written, the early stages of the teachings when I sometimes surprised myself when I gave answers, things I didn't know beforehand.

They just came. So I explained to her the mechanism behind the suffering and the possibility of, of course, she could leave him or she could discover that this is self-generated suffering and she could be free of that. And then suddenly she began to see it and she began to see the possibility of letting go of all that self-generated suffering.

And then she suddenly said, if I let go of it, what have I got left? So she was so identified with her suffering, it was like not only a close friend, the suffering was an essential part of, had become over the years an essential part of her sense of identity, of her sense of self. She did not want to let go.

And soon after she didn't want to come and see me anymore. So, but I do know that some of the things I said to her, later I put in the power of now. So she's in there somewhere.

And hopefully she lived long enough so that she could read the book and perhaps saw herself in there. And then perhaps at that stage, perhaps she was ready. We don't know.

We just have to accept some people are not yet ready, but do all you can not to force them to change, but to provide that to them that triggers, has to come from within them. The readiness to let go or to change has to come from within them. So how you do it will vary from person to person.

Use your intuition, go to the place of not knowing so that the intuitive, you can say helpful things that come from that deeper level that might make a difference to them. What that is, I cannot tell you because you can only know that you in that situation with that person. So go to the place of not knowing when you are with people, not continuously, but be there sometimes.

And then it's possible that what they need that can trigger an awakening, you might say to them or do to them, well, do, what would you do? Like be the Zen master and hit them sometimes, but you don't want to do that, but life does that if they don't change. Thanks.

Can you sue in court, suing court case, can you sue in court consciously over a breach of contract if you are not attached to the outcome or is one promoting conflict by doing this? So whether to sue or not to sue, that's the question. Well, on a practical level, I would do, well, also on a spiritual level, I would do everything possible to avoid suing, whatever you can.

There may be some cases where you cannot avoid it. And then your challenge will be, as the questioner mentions, not being attached to the outcome. And so how can you not be attached to the outcome?

Well, the only way is by being fully present in whatever action you need to take at this moment, go see the lawyer, talk to the lawyer, what are the possibilities? And all that implies in order not to be attached to the outcome, you need to be, you need to have one foot in the realm of being or presence where you're already fulfilled. This moment is actually fine as it is, whether or not you've win that case or not is not that important.

And whether you lose the, whatever you're fighting about, whether you lose the money or you don't lose the money is not as important as the mind tells you it is. The primary thing is, are you connected to the essence of who you are? If you're connected while you talk to the lawyer, can you be present talking to the lawyer?

Just the facts of it. This is that, that, that, what can we do? I suggest you do that, that, bring presence to it.

It's just that, and you're continuously just in the here and now. And once you go to court, you still, you sit there, present your case without the drama around it, or the huge amount of drama that people create around it.

[Speaker 12] (24:55 - 25:00)

Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah.

[Speaker 1] (25:00 - 55:14)

And drama when they talk to others, drama in their head at night when they can't sleep. Ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah. That is unnecessary baggage.

So it can be a spiritual challenge too. If you absolutely have to go to court because somebody did something to you that needs to be rectified, then make it a spiritual practice. And otherwise you create a lot of karma for yourself and others.

Present moment, one step at a time, one thing at a time. This, this, this. It's the same thing as chopping wood carrying water, really.

Same, just one, yes. What do you think about Facebook? Is it a healthy format?

It seems a bit egoic. Not a whole lot of transmission of connection, love, et cetera. Posting pictures of yourself and quantifying friends, likes, et cetera, seems like enhancing the ego.

Are we going down the wrong path with social media? Well, the questioner has a point. As even before the advent of Facebook and similar things for hundreds of years or thousands of years, people constructed for themselves an identity in their head.

That's me, me and my story, as I sometimes call it. And that was partly inherited from what your culture tells you you are, or your family and your culture, and partly by choice, certain things you choose to identify with and then incorporate into your sense of self. Certain possessions, certain achievements, or the lack of certain possessions and achievements can all be incorporated.

They become mind forms or thought forms, which you identify with. So there's a mental image that forms, and that's the essence of ego, a mental image that's me. So that's been going on for a long time.

And then people live through that mental image of me. They seek out things or people that can improve the mental image of me and try to keep away things or people that could weaken or threaten the mental image of me. It all means not being in touch with who you are beyond any mental image, which is why we are here, to go deep into that.

And now we got the technology of Facebook where you can externalize the image and you can create on the Facebook page, you can create the image of me and show it to the whole world. And so many young people, and maybe not so young, I believe the oldest Facebook user, I saw a video clip in the States, the world's oldest Facebook user is 105 years old. And it is often used unconsciously in enhancing the image one has of oneself and the image one wants to show to the world.

And then you read other people's images on their Facebook page, and you think that's who they are. And then you try to compete with that image and you try to polish up your image and compete with them. Most people want to show off, it seems, I'm not that familiar with it, but most people want to show the good things.

I'm having this great meal, here's a picture of it. Why would anybody want to see what you're eating right now? But they do, it seems.

Or I just bought this thing, do you want to see it? And then you can connect people to a place where you bought it, it's another thing. And all kinds of things that I don't understand.

So you can, in many cases, it becomes an artificial construct that you add to every day and everybody else has their artificial construct. And it can actually strengthen the delusion of the false self. Doesn't have to, but often it does.

Facebook can also be used in conveying interesting information and to connect with people at a deeper level or bringing about some spiritual knowledge. So that's not impossible. I used to post occasionally things, I don't do it myself, but I would send it to Steve and he would post it.

But I haven't, I must admit, I haven't done it in a while. Although some things do get posted, quotes and so on, that's fine. Twitter is another one that is a, there's a Twitter message coming in.

The last time I tweeted was when a few months ago in February, the Oprah Channel in the States, I don't know if you can get it here, it's called the OWN Channel, Oprah Winfrey Network. They showed a repeat of our webinar that we did a few years ago that I did with Oprah. They did a slightly shortened edited version of a period of 10 weeks, 10 Sundays.

The new earth was shown again on this time, not on the internet, but well, also on the internet, but on TV on, and Oprah sometimes is an active tweeter. And she said, it would be great if we could tweet at the same time while this program is being shown. And so I said, okay, I'll see what I can do.

So I was on the phone with Steve while the program was running and then I was watching it. And then people sent in these questions and they have to be answered immediately. So I was attempting to dictate answers to Steve and his assistant to put in the answers.

And my mind was quite, well, I felt almost dizzy afterwards. And because I tried to watch the program and at the same time watch the incoming tweets and think of an answer. But Oprah must have realized it wasn't from me because she said, Twitter is the exact opposite of how you operate.

And before Oprah said it, Kim said exactly the same thing to me. And that's true. So I was glad when it was over, but while it was happening, I was surrendered to it.

Although I did feel dizzy afterwards. So if you can avoid constructing some pseudo identity for yourself on Facebook and be more real, then you can avoid that trap of just the Facebook amplifying the human ego, which it does in many, many cases, especially for youngsters who have no idea what they're doing. Based on your teachings, the real me is the presence in me.

Also, there is the fake self, the ego in me, too. Most of the time I follow the ego and rarely I become the presence. So what is in me that follows or chooses from the two?

Or is there a third thing in me that does the following or the choosing? Okay. I think I understand the question.

There's a presence in me, the real me. There's a fake self, the ego. Most of the time I follow the ego and rarely I become the presence.

So what is it in me that chooses from the two? Or is there a third thing that does the choosing? It's a little complicated, but, well, the answer is there's neither the third nor the second, but only the one, only the one, the one consciousness.

The one consciousness, and again, it's a little bit, when I speak of it, it's a little bit of an analogy. It's not quite like that, but it is like that, but not, it's not it. The ego is really, one could say, consciousness dreaming, a dreamlike state.

It's an identification with form, mental, physical form. And consciousness is dreaming the dream of form. And when presence arises, consciousness awakens out of the dream of form.

And you suddenly recognize who you are is not the physical form, and who you are is not the psychological form, you and your story. You and who you are is the presence. And that's the awakening of consciousness through the human form.

So it's just a, the ego state is just consciousness dreaming, and presence is the awakened consciousness, but it's only one consciousness. So many, many philosophers and spiritual teachers, not surprisingly, have compared ordinary human existence with a dreamlike state. And they have also used the terminology, the awakening terminology, to describe the state of stepping out of the dream.

You can, when you observe a very unconscious human being, you can actually experience at firsthand what it means to live in a dreamlike state, because there's no awareness in them apart from the conditioned mind and the reactive patterns of the conditioned mind. So they go, they're just totally conditioned, and there's no freedom, there's no choice possible because the awareness isn't there that makes choice possible. So observing, or you can even observe entire collective entities of humans who are very unconscious, like a huge crowd of humans.

And a crowd of humans very often means that every individual in that crowd of humans, even though they may already be relatively unconscious, they become even more unconscious when they are part of a crowd, of a collective. So a crowd can perpetrate violence that the individual member of the crowd may not. They may not be that unconscious, but the moment a massive number of individuals come together, the level of consciousness is pulled lower of each individual.

And then the crowd become capable of inflicting terrible suffering on other humans. And the crowd can even be an entire machinery of a state or a government. They can be overtaken by deep unconsciousness and then inflict terrible.

We were a few months ago in Cambodia where they had this insane regime 20 or 25

years ago. The leader was called Pol Pot and the regime was called the Khmer Rouge. And they killed close to 50% of the population of their own country, totally deluded.

And we visited the killing fields where they keep thousands of skulls of people that were exterminated for no particular reason, just because in some cases they were educated. In some cases, because they looked at people's hands. Do you work manually with your hands?

No colors on your hands? Kill them because you're an exploiter. You don't work, you're not a peasant.

You work manually. They had a weird theory of the only good people are those who are peasants who work on the land, exterminate everybody else. You wore glasses, immediately they would kill you because it means you could read.

And the people who came up with that were actually intellectuals. Pol Pot was quite intellectual, totally, totally deluded. And the whole country was in the grip of enormous unconsciousness.

So babies were killed. They were unspeakable. You go there, and the same of course happens, you can go to other places, Nazi concentration camps.

I don't believe you can visit the gulags in Russia yet, but they had similar things, labor camps, people, millions died. So the unconsciousness of a collective can be incredibly deep, far greater than the unconsciousness of the individuals that make up the collective. If you took an individual out of the collective, he would still be a relatively unconscious person, but many of them would not be capable of perpetrating those acts of violence that they perpetrated when they are part of the collective.

I don't know why I'm talking about this because the question is, is there a third thing in me that chooses? Is that still the question? There is no third thing, and there is no second thing.

Yes, that's it. The consciousness can be asleep, and when consciousness is asleep, it sometimes dreams a nightmare. Life becomes a nightmare, just as a human, and a human is asleep, sometimes your dreams turn into terrible nightmares.

And sometimes it's a nightmare that awakens you because you can't stand it anymore. It becomes so dreadful that you go, ah, ah, ah, ah. And that's a little bit applies to the collective too.

When it becomes so dreadful, sometimes it leads to some form of awakening. So I also mentioned looking at, when you look at a very unconscious human, I think you will see what I mean when I say they are dreaming. Also a human who is totally in their mind, they're not really present with anybody.

When you meet them, they go, you see that 90% of their attention is absorbed by thought processes continuously. They, bzzz. So they just have enough left for outside so that they don't bump into furniture.

So there's a little bit of attention left for the outside. They still know there's something there, there's something there, but they don't really see anything. They don't look at the sky ever or the trees.

It's just nothing because it's not connected to my self-interest. What does the sky do for me? What does a tree do for me?

Well, if I can cut it down and use it here, then that's good. So, and so their attention is absorbed by, and so they have this, you know there's nobody there or the person, the being that's there is so behind their veil of thinking that it's hard to find. And so there's just a, and sometimes there's an emotional level in addition to that.

And the emotional level may be looking for some kind of reaction from you. Sometimes people are in a state of latent anger all the time. There's some humans who have this latent anger, which means they're just waiting for an excuse to be angry again at something.

That's how their ego functions. So they look at you and they try to get some emotion from you or may say something to provoke something and they get frustrated if they don't get a reaction. So this is being totally in a dreamlike state.

Many of you are experiencing or have experienced the shift from drifting back into dreamlike identification with mind and emotion into awakening. And some of you probably still fall back into the dreamlike state from time to time. And you talk to yourself.

And then what, you know what he did? He did, he never apologized for what he, and then I said to him, and you know what he said? And then I said, how dare you?

And he said, and of course you are always right. You're always the one who says the thing that is absolutely right. And he never even acknowledged me.

No gratitude whatsoever, didn't show any gratitude. What's story after story, after story. I have always felt a deep connection with animals and nature.

I feel drawn to them. This connection seems to be absent with most human beings. Why is this?

And this is the case with quite a few people have that. They feel a stronger connection to an animal or nature than they do with other human beings. As somebody said to me not long ago, she said, she was quite honest with me.

She said, I cried more when my dog died than when my mother died. Oh, so why is it that many humans find a deeper connection with the animal? Simply because the animal is being, is not as far removed through development of the mind from being as humans are.

The animal is in deeper connectedness with the origin of life, the source of life, of God, being, not obstructed by the human mind. So when you look at a dog, the dog, you can immediately sense the beingness of the dog because the beingness of the dog is not obscured by mental concepts. The dog has no concepts about you.

The dog just looks at you. And in most cases, the tail wags and you feel good suddenly. And when you look at a human, often there's a veil of, already a veil of judgments and interpretations because the being of the human is veiled by the mind.

And with some humans more than with others. You can sometimes just look at a human and you can see how thick or how thin the veil of mind and emotions is. It's a mental, emotional veil.

And that's there. And in that veil, that veil, they judge you. They might be looking at you, but they're already judging you.

So you can't sense the being of that human as easily as you can in the dog because the dog has no opinion about you. Isn't that amazing? The dog can sense, of course, your energy, but it doesn't have an opinion about you.

And that's so liberating. And that is why if you meet, if you become somebody who is no longer compulsively judging others, which all implies that you are no longer completely identified with the mind, with the stream of thinking, you become a very likable person, a person that everybody wants to be with and stay with. And they don't know why.

But the reason is they can sense that they are not being judged. And when you don't judge another, that's the real liking. That's where immediately the goodwill is there.

The goodwill is your natural state. Your natural state gets obscured by the mind. At the moment that the space opens up, the goodwill is there.

And then people will love you in the same way they love a dog or more. You know the prayer, please, dog, let me be the person my dog thinks I am. Now, of course, the dog doesn't think.

That's why the dog loves you. So anything natural can be a great help in when you look at it or you approach it or you touch it, whether it's a dog or a tree or flower, has that rootedness in being still. I don't know whether that, when I say that, whether that means anything to you, but I think it does.

It can only mean something to you if you can sense your rootedness in being. Otherwise it will be meaningless words. So anything natural has still that rootedness in being.

And that is so beautiful because it reflects back to you your own being. And not only that, when you go into nature and you go around, ultimately what's happening, because ultimately you are not separate from the rest of the world. You only seem to be encapsulated in a body, but really you become the consciousness through which nature recognizes its own beauty.

So when you look at a flower and you go, oh, because there's ultimately no separation between you and the flower, the flower through you becomes conscious of its own beauty. And then nature loves you for that. That is almost every, it welcomes you.

Oh, because you can contribute something that they want and need. The natural things want and need the consciousness which the human brings. Because without the human consciousness, the world is in a kind of, it's a, there's a beauty there, but the beauty isn't recognized.

And then the human consciousness comes in and it recognizes the beauty. It acknowledges the beauty. And that's an enormous step forward.

It's almost, as I believe I might have written that somewhere, it's almost as if nature had been waiting for humans to arrive, not to cut down the trees, no, to bring consciousness to it. And when you bring consciousness, you can sense how deeply rooted in being everything natural is. And when you can sense how deeply rooted in being it is, you can no longer want to destroy it or use it for egoic purposes or profit.

Then you actually know that that is, that nature is sacred and needs to be treated with great respect. This isn't something that you can, it's not something you need to learn. I need to treat nature with respect.

No, it's that arises spontaneously from within you. So nature loves you if you fully become conscious of it and bring your consciousness to the beauty of nature. It's only at that moment that it becomes beautiful.

The tree doesn't know it's beautiful, it just is. What the consciousness of the tree is, we can't even fathom. There is a consciousness there, but it's quite very different from the human consciousness, but it wants also the human.

That's my intuitive insight. And dogs and cats, of course, are drawn to humans. They love human interaction.

So it's enormously beneficial for both, for the dog and the human, or the cat and the human, to be together.

[Speaker 6] (55:39 - 58:23)

Thanks for the opportunity. I wrote it down, but it's not a fashion question. Over a period of six months or so, sickness or illness saw my dog get gradually sicker and sicker to the point where he was in much, much pain.

The x-rays and pills and probing did not find a cause that was treatable. We had a family meeting and collectively, we decided to have the vet end his life to ease his pain by injection. And you made a comment about a lady who felt more grief when she lost her dog than when her mother died.

And although it sounds mean, I had the same uncontrolled times of tears for many weeks afterwards, the death of my little buddy. I've considered the notion of ego and suffering and pain when remembering my companion in the now. I feel that in the final moments, that I betrayed our companionship.

My wife points out that it was a collective family decision based on the love of our missing, or of our family, pup. I was little to be in Spaniel. So my question, how do I remove the ego side of not having my buddy or companion around, whilst not removing and dismissing the love I continue to hold for him?

I realize that he's physically gone, but like in a recent interview with a quantum scientist author, I wondered about the connection. I met a nice chap here who lost a partner and he said that your talks help. And of course, I'm not comparing that loss, but I'm hoping you might find, or might contemplate and give pointers again to perhaps how I can let go of the form and then still remember the love part without getting sadder and getting attached.

Yes. Hope that makes sense.

[Speaker 1] (58:23 - 1:00:10)

Yes, thank you. I understand. And the same question would apply also to if somebody close to you dies.

People who have not had a close connection with an animal like a dog may not understand you. Only people who have had that will understand that it can be as painful as losing a human. And we had the same experience when our dog passed away under similar circumstances.

And in the end, because she was suffering too much, we had to ask the vet to come and she died peacefully. And she had a wonderful life, was loved and gave love for nine years. And her consciousness, she was a female, benefited greatly from being together with us, with humans and with us in particular.

And we benefited from her unconditional, continuously loving presence. She loved almost everybody.

[Speaker 6] (1:00:13 - 1:00:14)

Same.

[Speaker 1] (1:00:14 - 1:08:14)

She loved almost every other dog or animal and almost every other human with very few exceptions. And whenever somebody, whether it's an animal that you are very close to or a human, the moment a person dies or an animal dies, you realize what you loved was not the physical form or the physical form may be beautiful and part of the loving experience. But the moment the life is gone, that which you loved is not there anymore.

Something inhabits the physical form that is the essence, the organizing principle, the intelligence, whatever you want to call it behind that keeps the molecules and atoms of the physical form together and organizes, holds them together. Science has not, doesn't know about that yet. It only life, it equates life with matter, but life is beyond that.

And ultimately life is consciousness. And the dog is an expression of the one consciousness, different from a human. The human is an expression of the one consciousness or any non-physical entity can only also be an expression of the one consciousness.

The one consciousness expressing itself at different levels of evolution, so it's like a, you could say a ray of sunlight. You are a ray of sunlight and I am, and the dog is, and the flower is, all consciousness incarnating in form. So that does not die.

The essence doesn't die. And the dog, it's not a dog. I mean, we think we know what we are talking about when we say a dog.

No, it is a being, an energy field, a being, an expression of the one consciousness. It's not, we think we know when we label things and call it something, we think we know what it is. We don't know what a dog is.

And just by calling it dog, it's still, it's just pseudo knowledge. We don't know what a human is. Just the fact that somebody has a name, we think you know what that is.

No, it's an unknown phenomenon. It's through the language gives us illusion that we know, but we don't really know. And so here you have the dog, this wonderful presence closed in matter temporarily.

And something happened because consciousness evolves throughout the universe and evolves in billions of ways and forms, in and through billions of ways and forms. It's a magnificent, ultimately totally incomprehensible miracle, totally incomprehensible to the

human mind. But consciousness is engaged in this evolutionary process, the one consciousness.

And whatever suffers is the one consciousness. It's not a coincidence that there's a religion on this planet where the main image is a suffering God. Isn't that strange?

I mean, we have some explanation for it. We say, well, that was Jesus who died for this. Let go of that explanation and just remain with the fact that here the main image of that religion is a suffering, basically, or that you call son of God or God, doesn't matter, a suffering God.

And there's a deep significance to that. You don't have to be a Christian. In fact, if you're a Christian, you probably don't want to go there where I'm going now.

There's a deep significance there because this suffering God is everybody. It is the fundamental human archetype. It's the suffering that every human and every life form, but in this case, a human, he represents the human, that every life form goes through when this life form assumes the form of the material form, the seemingly separate material, physical vehicle, and is then defined in form.

There were ancient teachings. They are quite close to the truth that say that consciousness fell into matter as if it were a mistake. But I don't think, I think it's a good image to say that consciousness, there was a kind of fall of consciousness into matter, but it wasn't a mistake.

There is no, there are no mistakes in the universe. So, and if there is a mistake, it has a higher purpose for learning, and so it's not a mistake anymore. So that, for those years that you lived together, you both, your consciousness and the dog's consciousness, which are not really separate, although we just call them that, benefited greatly and grew, evolved through being together.

So it helped the dog and it helped you. It added something to your consciousness, that being together with that entity, with that being. And that is not lost.

I cannot tell you in what way this, that which animated that entity that we call dog continues on its journey back to the source, but it continues on its journey as you continue on it, not as a person, not as a personal identity that survives, but an underlying energy field, the underlying consciousness that gives rise to this form, of course, continues on its journey and ultimately is never separate from its source.

It just believes itself to be separate. So it's an evolutionary journey. It's not, and every form will eventually die.

The form dissolves. So you keep the love in your heart and that's how you stay connected with that being. And don't go to where the ego wants to take you.

That is, have some kind of recrimination that you shouldn't have allowed the dog to die and all that kind of egoic stuff. The ego loves to go there. Of course, you know very well that you did and the family did what you felt was the right choice and you did.

So don't allow the mind to take you that road.

[Speaker 13] (1:08:15 - 1:08:18)

Thank you very much.

[Speaker 6] (1:08:18 - 1:08:18)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:08:36 - 1:21:40)

Here's a person who has a somewhat more interesting challenge than chopping wood, carrying water. I have always felt like most people hate me, that they wished I wasn't there. I felt as if I repulsed them, that they were all talking together about me and that I must be a very bad person.

I felt enormous pain from this and it has caused a lot of problems in my relationships. Can you help me? I have always felt like most people hate me, that they wished I wasn't there.

I felt as if I was repulsed, as if I repulsed them, that they were all talking together about me. It's likely that that goes back to certain childhood experiences. On the whole, to anybody who feels that people don't like them, my question would be, do you like people?

And it is virtually impossible that if you like people, that they do not like you. There may be certain individuals that don't like you, but on the whole, if you, if you, if and again, we come back to the word, benevolence or goodwill, if there is an outflow from you towards others of a basic underlying benevolence or goodwill, even though you might have arguments with them or discussions or whatever, or have to tell them this or that, if there isn't basic, that underlying emanation of benevolence or goodwill, that basically then in simplified terminology, that would mean you like people. And if you like people, with a few exceptions that may happen here and there, you can't please everybody, and you're not liking people in order to please them, that's, we are not talking about that.

This is, we're talking about a true emanation of benevolence towards them, which you can only really do if you are sufficiently connected with the being within yourself. Then from there comes the outflow of benevolence because you recognize the same being or the same consciousness in the other. And that brings about the goodwill and benevolence that flows from you to the other.

And that then becomes, so you're not attempting to get these people to like you, that doesn't work, it has to be genuine. You can't say, I'm trying to like people, but they still don't like me. So it has to come at a true goodwill towards others, which is almost an energy that flows and that connects you with the other.

And no matter whether it's somebody that you know or somebody you meet briefly and casual encounter, and even there, it's important because these are all relationships and they all leave behind something in the other person. If you are rude to that person, that could be amplified in that person. If that person is already unstable, it could be amplified and then lead to further karmic action of that person towards somebody else.

And you can travel around the planet and become magnified. So there's enormous responsibility, really, if you see the repercussions of whatever behavior you manifest towards others are enormous. And it's easy to overlook that.

Whatever energy you put out does not stop there. It goes into another person and then it does what, if the other person, let's say you get angry with someone and then that energy resonates in the other and strengthens that vibration that was already there in the other and gets amplified in the next person, in the next, and then spreads. So that's all collective karma.

So when I say, if you like people, then you find that people generally, not in every case, generally like you. You cannot be liked by everybody. You have to, and especially if you become, if you write a book or something and then you expect everybody to like that book, then you're going to suffer because no matter what book you write, there will be 10% of people who say that's the worst thing they've ever read.

You can look at the, on anywhere on the internet or Amazon about people criticizing. If it's a book that has had large readership, there will be 10% who say dreadful, although 90% might say it's the greatest thing we've ever read. And those 10%, the number grows, the more people read it.

And suddenly you have 10,000 people who say it's awful. So you can't be liked or your, whatever you produce cannot be liked by everybody. But generally speaking, the energy that you put out comes back to you.

And that's the famous, I believe it's called the golden rule that was not voiced by Jesus and before Jesus by others. Whatever you do, don't, it can be phrased negatively. That was already Confucius.

Don't do to others what you don't want others to do to you or do unto others how you, treat others the way you want to be treated, basically. Treat others the way you want to be treated. So the energy you put out comes back to you.

If you like people, generally speaking, people like you. So this person has not discovered

in herself the dimension of being and the fullness of life that is within. If she goes deeper within, it's only there she can become free of this conditioning that may go back to childhood and probably does, that not the feeling of not being liked by anybody.

And it is quite possible or probable that she was not liked as a child. So there was no love given to her as a child. So she experienced humans as unloving and as not liking her.

Once this pattern became lodged in her, it was very difficult to experience the world in any other way. And unfortunately, a conditioning of that kind actually becomes self-fulfilling because it generates its reflection in the other. If you are convinced that people don't like you, that becomes true in your experience.

So this is why the pattern reinforces itself every day. Every day this person encounters somebody, the pattern gets kind of acknowledged. You see, I knew it.

Nobody likes me. And again and again, because that's the underlying. So you need to become, I'm not saying you, I don't think this person probably is not here, but you need to become, you need to transcend this pattern and this belief that tells you people don't like me.

You need to become more present with every person you meet. And become still, even before you meet anybody, become still, become present, and sense the essence of who you are beyond the form, which is conscious presence. Then you are no longer a person.

You are a conscious presence. This person is still trapped in the image of me, the person, and not a likable person. It's a limiting image.

And then once there's a connection with that conscious presence, you can meet another person and you look into their eyes and you can feel the connection and you can feel a goodwill towards the other. You begin to like others. So you cannot not be liked, generally speaking, if you like other people, you become a likable person.

And if you don't like other people, you are not a likable person. But the liking, as I just said, goes deeper than just the superficial liking. And it can never be a means to an end.

You're not kind to somebody because you want to be liked. It's not really. So it's a really, it's a giving rather than expecting something from the other.

You give to the other the goodwill. You give to the other the benevolence rather than standing back and saying, how is he going to react towards me? Or what's his behavior towards me?

You become then a passive recipient and you're just waiting for your underlying patterns to be confirmed. And usually they are. Oh, you see, he doesn't like me.

Nobody likes me. So instead of that, you become the active agent rather than a passive agent waiting for the behavior of others towards you. And then all the behavior of others towards you does is confirm your patterns.

So instead, you bring the energy to the other. You approach the other. You give attention to the other.

This is already love. People love being given attention. Some suck it up.

They want to get, suck it out of you. It's a different thing. But people love being, if you give your fullest attention to another person, they show that they are really, oh, this person is really interested in me.

I love meeting people in hotels when they bring, there's a room service. It's always, it's an encounter. It lasts only two minutes, but it's an encounter of goodwill.

There's a human, primarily you're meeting a human being. Only secondary is the function of that human being is a waiter or a waitress or whatever. Temporary disguise, this human wears a temporary disguise of waiter.

It's meaningless, but there's a human being. You're meeting a human being. And are you valuing this human being as a human being or is it just a waiter to you?

But this could apply to anything, to any human. Is that human just a function that this human performs or is there something deeper in that human? And you always address the deeper human, not the function.

The function is on the surface, that's fine, but you're not meeting a waiter, you're meeting a being, a human being.

[Speaker 9] (1:21:59 - 1:22:14)

Hi. Hi. I don't know, I don't really know what to ask, but I know I need to ask.

Maybe there is no question.

[Speaker 1] (1:22:15 - 1:22:18)

How are you experiencing this retreat?

[Speaker 9] (1:22:23 - 1:23:07)

I think I'm really below thinking. Okay. And I fell very, very deep.

Yeah. And here it feels more safe. And sometimes it's, I feel a little bit of my, I can barely feel my feet again and sometimes my right hand.

But often when I try to feel more and more, it's like I try to catch it and then it's gone. Yeah. And I'm afraid that I will fall much deeper.

Then that I'm now.

[Speaker 1] (1:23:25 - 1:23:40)

How do you experience being here as you sit there, you listen, how do you feel about sitting here and listening, is that a pleasant experience?

[Speaker 9] (1:23:42 - 1:23:52)

I'm always like, I'm never really here. Okay. Always thinking and.

Okay. But I always think where is my mind? Right.

[Speaker 1] (1:23:54 - 1:27:29)

So I think you briefly mentioned body awareness. So we haven't spoken too much about it yet here a little bit. That is of course, especially for people who are very much in their head, it's a powerful anchor for being present in the now to feel the inner body.

And you can feel at least parts of the inner body. You can feel your hands as you sit there. Sometimes.

Sometimes. Okay. That's good enough.

It's a starting point and you can feel your hands and you can feel your feet as you sit here or stand there and then keep your attention there. And then the mind will take your attention away then bring your attention back. It's really very helpful for you.

The movement practice, you will be in one of the groups with Kim. Do you have any physical practice of any kind so far? No.

So for you to take up either Tai Chi, Qigong or yoga would be very helpful. You have to, you can try the three and choose the one that you resonate with. I have a feeling it'll be either Tai Chi or yoga.

You know Tai Chi is, Tai Chi is, I don't know if you're familiar with Tai Chi. Tai Chi is some of what Kim does incorporates Tai Chi. Tai Chi is slow bodily movement that originated in China thousands of years ago.

And this I feel would help you greatly to take your attention. You'll be forced to take your attention away from thinking and into your movements and into your body. It's not enough for you to sit here.

It's helpful. It sinks in more than you know, not only the words, but also the energy field

of being here is helpful. And whether or not your mind knows that or not, the energy is going into you, but you do need a practice and it's not meditation for you, at least not yet, or maybe not at all.

Meditation is not for everybody and you can evolve without meditation. I'm talking about this formal meditation. It's a wonderful thing for many people, but not for everybody.

But movement meditation would be absolutely what you need. So you need to explore where you live, whether any good teachers or places where you can take that up. I highly recommend, and my feeling is it's probably going to be Tai Chi, but you may also try yoga.

And don't believe your mind when it says, no, well, there's not really any point. I don't know if I'm going to do that. You have to do it.

[Speaker 9] (1:27:36 - 1:27:39)

Okay. Thank you. Okay.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:39 - 1:27:49)

Okay. Next time I'm in Australia, I want to see you again. No, I'm not from here.

Where are you from?

[Speaker 9] (1:27:49 - 1:27:50)

Austria.

[Speaker 1] (1:27:51 - 1:27:54)

Okay. Austria. I'll be in Europe next year.

[Speaker 13] (1:27:54 - 1:27:58)

If I'm near Austria, I hope to see you. Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (1:28:27 - 2:15:38)

Well, welcome to our live meditation or meditative talk and a special welcome to all of you who are joining us today through the Huffington Post. There may be quite a few newcomers to meditation or mindfulness as it's often called. So let's start with some very basic things.

The first thing is to enter that meditative state of consciousness because that's what it is all about. Meditation is about a shift in consciousness away from concern with doing and

thinking and becoming aware, really directly aware of the present moment. And that's perhaps the easiest and most accessible starting point for most people to enter the state of presence, which is the aim of meditation is to get you into that state of absolute presence in this moment.

And that's being, becoming aware of being. Most people are always engaged in doing. That includes thinking continuously.

And a lot of the thinking that people do is not very uplifting. A lot of the thinking that happens compulsively creates negative feelings. And a lot of the thinking is actually harmful and dysfunctional.

It doesn't serve any useful purpose, but you just can't stop it. Well, you think you can't, but you can. And that's of course what meditation is about, to realize there is in you a deeper dimension of consciousness, deeper or higher, you could call it, depending from where you look at it, deeper or higher than thinking.

And that is the state of presence in the now. So it's an amazing realization for most people that they can actually easily access that state of presence by bringing their attention into the present moment, like now. So I'm kind of, although I'm talking, my aim is to talk you, so to speak, into that state of meditation.

And it helps if while I talk, you can become conscious or aware of the small gaps between words as I talk. So you're just aware, not only of the words, of course you hear the words, you take them in, but you're also aware that there are little spaces between the words. You just acknowledge that.

These are little meditative gaps, so to speak. And in order to be really aware of the meditative gaps, you can't be thinking. You are just aware of that space.

There is, what does that mean, aware? There is a presence in that awareness. You know in that awareness, like now, you know that you are here as a conscious presence without any thought telling you that.

And in other words, you become aware of yourself, not as a person, because to be a person, you need to be thinking about you and your life and your problems and so on. But there's a deeper dimension in you, deeper than the person. And this is what we are here to access.

So you become aware that really on the surface of your life, there is the person with a past and a future and all the thinking and the emotions that keep the person going, of course. And so you're happy one day, unhappy the next. Happy one day, unhappy.

The fluctuations of the person, it's quite normal. And the person is always concerned with doing and thinking and the next thing or the past, the future. The past is never

really present.

When you become present, like now, you realize that there is a deeper part in you. There is a deeper dimension to who you are. Where you are more than a person, where you are a presence, a conscious presence.

The question is, can you sense, feel, or be aware of yourself at this moment as a conscious presence, without which there couldn't even be a person? So it's almost like saying, the person is the surface of the ocean or the ripples or the waves on the surface of the ocean, but you are not just the ripples or waves on the surface of the ocean, you are the ocean. So there's a deeper presence in you.

And to access that and to sense that in yourself, to sense yourself as the presence, a presence, that is what liberates you from being completely trapped and limited in an exclusively personal identity. In other words, there is more to you than meets the eye. You are deeper than you ever knew by thinking about yourself.

And it's not difficult to access that dimension in yourself. Can one describe it? Well, one can give a few pointers.

Let's see if that makes sense. The pointers I'm giving you now, let's see if they make sense in your own experience at this moment, sensing yourself as a presence. There is a peacefulness there.

There is a, that is really the essence of what is sometimes called inner peace. The person, the surface of the ocean, the waves and the ripples of the ocean cannot be at peace for long, it fluctuates. Occasionally if things happen to go well, yeah, I'm happy, it never lasts for very long.

And then the storm comes and big waves come or little, little irritated waves, whatever. Then you're unhappy, but there's a deeper, if let's say you are a ripple on the surface of the ocean with a name and a date of birth and a past and a future and problems. And suddenly the ripple realizes there's more to me and realizes, oh, I'm actually much deeper and faster.

I'm the ocean manifesting as the ripple. And so you are the universe or the consciousness that underlies the sense-perceived universe manifesting temporarily as a person. You are the universe becoming conscious of itself at this moment in your life as a person.

You are not separate from the totality of the universe. You are the universe. The universe has, or the consciousness that underlies the universe has given form to who you are temporarily in order to experience itself as a person.

It's an amazing thing. And the universe here is in the process of becoming more

conscious. That's what the entire evolution of the universe is about.

It's consciousness. So you, your life is part of the evolutionary impulse towards greater consciousness. And if your life is not primarily about greater consciousness, which actually you can build into whatever you do, it doesn't mean you stop doing it, just say, all I'm interested in is consciousness.

No, it needs to flow into what you do. If that, if your life purpose is not aligned with the conscious, the evolving consciousness of the universe, then what is the point of it all? And then sooner or later, you get very frustrated and things become pointless.

So you are here to become more conscious because that's what the universe has put you here for. Instead of universe, you can use other terms. You're more comfortable with them.

The universal intelligence, God. So right now, in addition to being a person, which right now is not important, it becomes important again when we finish our meditation, I'm sure. But right now, something else is more important.

That's realizing yourself as the presence. Coming into the present moment and feeling, just being aware right now that you are conscious. If you were not conscious, you wouldn't be able to hear, see, perceive anything.

The fact that you can perceive things, the fact that you can think, the fact that you can have emotions, all implies that you are conscious. The meditative state is becoming aware directly of that consciousness. Sometimes the word that is used also is stillness.

Right now, you become still. You become aware of just being, of being that presence and that feels energizing. You don't go to sleep.

You're actually alert and still at the same time. And now you access an intelligence that is deeper than the thinking mind by entering that state of alert presence. And then when you think again, you are connected with a, with the source of all intelligence, with creativity.

You are, you become empowered. Your thinking and your doing and your actions are then aligned with a deeper purpose of the universe, not just little egoic desires. So all this is so terribly important.

Aligning your life with that presence. So you need to, during your normal day, I'll give you a few hints of how to invite that presence into your life, which by invite, I mean, direct your attention to it because it's always there. That really is what supports you in life.

And if you can be aware of that, fear, anxiety, happen less and less in your life because

you can feel supported by that vast presence, which is not just your, it's not your own presence. It is the universal presence of consciousness. You connect with that.

You are that. So on a day, normal day, you go to work or whatever you do, as much as you can, become aware of just brief moments of yourself as the presence in addition to being a person. So one of the things I recommend is, it sounds almost too simple, but from time to time, look at the sky for a few seconds.

You look up, it doesn't matter whether it's blue or cloudy. Today here is the early afternoon, happens to be a sunny day. Look at the sky for a moment.

You're looking, but not thinking. You could do that with anything, but the sky is easier because there's this vast expanse that has some correlation with the presence of stillness within you. So you look, and for a moment, there's just, there's the sky, and you can sense yourself as the presence that is perceiving, and you're not thinking.

So there's a brief moment of not thinking, but not going to sleep. Alertness without thinking, that's the key. To bring that into your life more often.

And don't believe when your mind tells you that you need to think and think and think all the time. Bring in gaps of just alert presence. That's the being.

The rest is the doing. The two need to be, there needs to be a balance in your life between being and doing, otherwise you go mad. A civilization that completely loses touch with the being dimension is going to self-destruct.

And a person who completely loses touch with the being dimension is going to be very unhappy, unfulfilled, always anxious or depressed, or always stressed. What does, some, many people live in continuous stress. What does that mean?

They're always focused on the next thing, and the next thing pulls them away from where they are here and now. And always there's the promise, when I reach that point, I'll be okay. But of course, the reaching that point is always very brief.

And then they realize, oh, I'm not okay. I need to reach another point. It's a great thing, of course, to have goals in life.

But if the goal takes up so much of your attention continuously, where you need to get to, that you continuously miss the present moment, which after all is all there ever is, then your life is completely out of balance. The balance is, yes, having goals. You know where you're going.

That's good. But you are aware of the step you're taking at this moment. And you're aware of the flowers, the sky, the trees, life that continuously unfolds around you.

You acknowledge, you honor the present moment. And on a deeper level, you are aware

of yourself as the presence. So I also recommend that during your normal day, you become familiar with perceiving things that are around you.

Without thinking, you need to judge or label or interpret them or name them all the time. So for example, you can look at a tree or the sky or anything, a piece of furniture, an animal, without naming it. You're just, this is a lovely practice.

You can do it right now because you're looking at me. Well, to you, I am an image on the screen and the words that you're hearing. You can look at this image on the screen, me, without saying anything mentally about it.

What for? You can actually perceive it better, more clearly, without the interference of thinking. So you're just there as the alert presence in the background of your perceptions.

Like now, you're looking at me and you're aware of yourself, which is more important than me. You're aware of yourself as that, which makes the perception possible. Presence, conscious presence.

And the same thing you can do, looking at anything. You look at a chair, a table for a few seconds and you're not labeling it mentally. You're not interpreting it, just clear perception.

So then there are two dimensions to the sense perception. There's whatever is being perceived by the senses, hearing, seeing, perhaps touching, whatever. And the presence behind it, which is a deeper dimension of who you are.

And so in that way, you bypass the person when you perceive things. You can bypass the person because the person interprets according to his or her conditioning. But if you want to get, if you want to transcend the conditioning of your mind, you can perceive without interpretation unless an interpretation is necessary.

So you bring, if people may ask you something, then you have to speak, or sometimes things will come. That's fine, thoughts come. You cannot be totally free of labeling and interpreting and you need it sometimes.

Sometimes you need to figure things out. At other times, trying to figure something out adds nothing to the experience. It detracts from the experience.

So be aware also of beauty around you. And the more present you are perceiving in this clear, nonjudgmental way, the more you will see beauty and aliveness around you that before you had ignored because you were always going somewhere else or your attention was so absorbed by thinking that you were only sufficiently aware, peripherally aware of your surroundings, just preventing you from bumping into things, but otherwise totally in your head, thinking about your problems.

So you get out of that into presence and so the balance comes into your life. So make it a practice to perceive things in that state of alert presence. And another little, very helpful, I don't want to call it technique, but let's, perhaps it is a kind of technique to enable you to be present is, as I call it, to feel the aliveness inside your body.

That sounds perhaps a little strange if you are not, you haven't heard this before. What do you mean, feel the aliveness in your body? Well, for those of you who have not had a glimpse of that yet, I suggest the following little practice right now.

If you hold your, let's say your right or your left hand, just hold it and close your eyes for a moment. And so your hand is kind of just floating there. Close your eyes for a moment and ask yourself, without opening my eyes, without moving my hand and without touching anything, is there any way I can know whether my right hand is still there?

So you're not moving your hand, you're not touching anything. You're not looking at it because your eyes are closed. Is there any way you can know whether, it's a weird question, it's true, but it gets you somewhere.

Is there any way you can know whether your right hand is still there? How can you know that without looking or moving your hand or touching anything? Okay, let's see now.

Is your right hand still there? And now you will notice, you can feel it. You can feel it, you can feel its presence from the inside.

At first it's very subtle, and then you feel it more strongly. And if you now open your eyes, you will notice that you can still feel your right hand, even though other perceptions have come in, you're looking again. But even as you're looking, you can still feel the aliveness inside your hand.

That takes some of your attention away from continuous thinking. And that, I would now recommend that you expand that a little. And even without closing your eyes now, see if you can feel the energy in both your hands at the same time.

Or if you like, close your eyes for a few seconds. And then you might notice it gets a little stronger, that feeling. Undoubtedly, your hands are alive.

There is an aliveness in there. Of course there is, because that's what keeps the body going. If that aliveness leaves, the molecules and atoms that make up your hand would very quickly depart.

They would not be together anymore, and that would be the end of your body. So what holds your body together, there is an energy there that is the organizing principle behind the physical form of the body. It's invisible.

And scientists haven't found it yet. Because the only way you can find it is by not by

looking outside, but by introspection, by looking within. So you can sense the energy in your hands.

That's okay, that's good. And that takes some of your attention away from thinking. It brings you a little bit more into the present moment.

And then you might want to experiment, see if, well, if I can feel my hands, perhaps I can also feel the energy in my feet. So your attention goes, you direct your attention there. It goes there.

Are my feet still there? Yes, perhaps not as strong a feeling as the hands, but yes, you can feel your feet too. So initially you can just play around with that a little bit and feel, hold that attention for a couple of minutes in your feet and your hands, and see if you can feel your feet and your hands simultaneously, like, hmm.

And it's quite pleasant. And you may notice right now, as you're aware of the energy in your feet and your hands, and you keep your attention there, there isn't that much attention left for thinking. So this is where the state of alert presence opens up.

And then you may notice a little bit the rest of the body. Also, you begin to feel, not as strongly as the hands or feet, but you begin to feel that a sense of aliveness pervades your entire body. And that is a lovely meditation in itself.

A wonderful time to practice it, for example, is at night, before going to sleep, you lie on your bed, on your back, stretch out your hands flat on your back. And instead of thinking about your problems or about all the obnoxious people in your life, you take your attention into the energy field of the body and feel the aliveness. You always usually start with the hands, then gradually bring in other parts, the arms.

And as I speak now, I hope that you can verify in your own experience right now what it is I'm talking about, which is feeling the aliveness in your body. That is an, and then at night you can do it beautifully and actually enjoy feeling alive. It is joyful to feel that your body is being pervaded by this energy, which is not separate from who you are, which is who you are, which is consciousness.

The organizing principle behind the hundreds and thousands of functions that keep the body alive, that need to be coordinated every second, that is of such vast complexity that even now with all the advances we've made in science, we only understand a tiny fraction of how the body actually works. There is an expression of vast intelligence behind it. That is the organizing principle behind the body.

And so to get in touch with that deeper intelligence is a wonderful thing. And then you realize when you enter the state of presence, you become present with your entire body. Every cell feels more alive and you become still.

You might've noticed that when you really feel the inner body, as I call it, you're not thinking anymore. You're just present. And the more you access being just present, it's almost paradoxical, the more effective, creative, powerful your thinking becomes when you do think.

And the less negative and destructive, self-destructive your thinking becomes. So we are talking about finding the intelligence, the deeper intelligence within you. You don't want to always having to go to some other source for the really important answers in your life.

Please tell me I need to know this or that. Yes, it's good to want to know. That's part of the evolution, the evolutionary impulse.

But any spiritual teacher, whether the spiritual teacher is in the physical form or you have some other teacher as a spirit guide or whatever it is, any true teacher will teach you, show you, demonstrate how to access the source of all knowledge and wisdom in yourself. So that's what this evolution is about. Let's see if you can still feel yourself right now as that alive presence.

Your entire body is this being. And it's not a question of necessarily either being or doing although sometimes it's good to just be. But also even while you do, you can be aware of being.

For example, you're driving, you're stopping at the lights. What is there to do now? Nothing, no matter how much you think that you want to be somewhere else, you're not.

Why not use that opportunity whenever there's a red light and you stop your car if you drive, or if you're a pedestrian, you stop at the stand, you stop walking at the light. Use that, those moments or that one moment and feel the aliveness in your body and feel the presence. Whenever you're waiting for something, and it's amazing how much time we actually spend waiting.

Oh, but I read the other day that they figured out in the average person's life who drives from between the age of 20 and 70 or whatever, that person spends several days of his or her life waiting in the car at the red light. If you add it all up, it makes up several days of this person's life. Mm-hmm.

And then you have many other occasions when you wait, you wait for the elevator. Why not use all these waiting times? You wait in line at the supermarket, you wait in line at the airport.

Instead of complaining in your head that you would rather not be waiting or how inefficient these people are, and this creates negative emotion, doesn't make your life more pleasant. Instead of that, just be aware of the aliveness in your body and bring your attention into just this moment. Be comfortable with this moment.

You feel alive inside and you can even, you can look around at the aliveness outside people doing this, doing that, traffic moving there, moving there. And you can actually enjoy the world. It's miraculous.

All these life forms that continuously appear and dance their dance for a little while to be replaced by other life forms. But it's all the expression of one underlying consciousness, one life taking on many forms. But your true identity is that one life.

Life is one. But there's no need to believe that because then it's only just another belief, which you can say, oh no, somebody else. It's not one, okay?

So it's not a belief. When you get still and present without losing alertness, in fact, gaining more alertness, then you are in touch with the oneness, the one. And that is the source of all life that has form because that is formless.

What you call that one life is up to you. Universal intelligence, the one, God, or as the Buddha called it, emptiness, which really means formlessness. That's what the Buddha pointed to as the essence.

Or as Jesus called it, the kingdom of heaven. It's the same as Buddhist term, emptiness. Heaven is vast spaciousness.

In many languages, heaven and sky are the same word. Vast spaciousness, formless, one life. That's who you are.

So it's really, this is all about knowing yourself. That's the journey you are on. It's the journey to yourself.

It's a journey without distance. And I thank you for joining us and I wish you well on your journey. It's a wonderful adventure.

Thank you.

[Speaker 2] (2:16:19 - 3:12:12)

The secret of dropping into this moment is really allowing this moment to be as it is. As Eckhart would say, and in the words of this person sitting here, it's really resist nothing, resist absolutely nothing. So whatever arises, you surrender to.

Even if there's resistance, you surrender to the resistance, allowing it to be here fully and completely. And what does that mean? What does that look like?

That means, say for example, if the pain body comes up, surrendering, accepting it, resisting nothing of what arises physically, mentally. But what it means is that you accept it so much so that you are willing to feel it and be with it forever. Because the moment that you have even the slightest bit of, I want it to go away, you're not allowing

it to be as it is.

You're not accepting it. That slightest bit. And we all know that when that slightest bit comes, it's like, oh no, I want it to be different.

No, I want it to change. Oh no, please. Okay, I'll accept it, I'll accept it, I'll accept it.

But oh no. It's letting go of time completely, a future of past and fully being here in this moment. Just as it is.

Pain body and all. Or even physical pain. Or even emotional.

Any emotion. Sadness, grief, anger, doesn't matter. Just allowing it to be.

Being this space because you are that space. But the moment that you begin to resist what arises in that space, we've become identified with that form of whatever is arising. So by allowing it to be as it is, it's like we separate ourselves from the form.

Realizing that this space in which the form arises, this space is who we are. And all we are is that witness to what arises. But of course, it's more than just witnessing.

Because we are feeling human beings, we have to feel what arises. And feel it completely. Non-resistant to the present moment.

Demanding nothing. Accepting everything just as it is. And the moment that you accept it, it's like the space opens up.

And you can sense into that stillness. The stillness of who you really are. And realize, ah, okay, this is pretty cool.

I am this space. And all this, the form, the play of consciousness, is really nothing at all. It's not that important.

What's important is that we are this space. That recognition of that space. Then we don't lose consciousness.

In other words, become unconscious, identified with whatever is arising, thought, emotion, opinion, judgment. And believing that that is real. Of course, the miracles, their introduction, where it says, nothing real can be threatened.

Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God. So it's not about getting rid of what's out here, what's playing.

It's about sensing into and realizing that you are the space in which the play happens. And then when that happens, it's like, you recognize, it's like the two become one. And not forgetting that you are the space, even though the play is all dancing around.

There's ups and downs and all forms being impermanent. And recognizing the impermanence of form. And that, then nothing becomes a real problem.

It doesn't mean that you won't ever feel emotions. You will. And that's all part of it.

Part of the play. But there isn't that resistance to the emotion. And here in the West, it's strongly ingrained in us that emotions are somehow not so good.

Eckhart and I will kind of quite often joke, because I'm this Asian woman. Lots of emotion, fire, you know. And when you hear Chinese people talk and they're speaking in their native language, and it looks like they're yelling at each other.

I mean, seriously, it does. It looks like they're yelling at each other. And Eckhart would say, well, actually, you know what they're saying?

They're saying, I love you, I love you, I love you. And you know, but here, you know, we're more conservative, more, you know. So it's actually quite interesting because I was born in Canada in this Asian body with the Asian cultural ancestry.

And even though I was born in Canada, I could still feel very, very much Asian and Chinese in the way that I just interact. And it's interesting because when I was younger, I felt like, because in Vancouver where I grew up, I think at that time, there were only maybe like three Chinese families at our school. So I was one of those kids who went through a lot of suffering and was teased a lot, get teased even walking home from school and such, to the point where I just said, I don't wanna be Chinese anymore.

And I stopped talking Chinese. I just stopped. I didn't wanna do it.

And none of us kids, I come from a family of four siblings, and it's interesting, but all of us went through the same thing. We all decided at a very young age to stop. And it's like, wow, you know, now that I'm older and it's like, wow, I can't even speak to my mother.

My mother was born in China and she was, and she speaks Chinese. In fact, she speaks very little English. That's how come we got along so well when growing up.

We couldn't talk to each other, we couldn't fight. We couldn't understand each other. But what I'm pointing to is that all of us, no matter where we have come from, we have somehow come to this point where all of us, for some reason or another, decided that we can't really be.

I mean, yes, it may be some part of cultural conditioning and the way that expressions come out, but we've all learned to somehow kind of hide ourselves. And we've all reaching that point where it's like, I can't hide myself any longer. Now, I don't mean the self as in the egoic sense of self.

But I mean our true self, the true identity of who we really are, which is really no identity at all. No identification with who we think we are, because we are not any thought. I am not Chinese.

Even though quite often, many people may look, and this is what happens, is that we begin to place labels. We become so identified with the thought process, with words, labels, that we actually can't see past them. Which the first lesson in the Course in Miracles is being able to look around the room or look wherever you are outside your window, and you look at things and you say, this table does not mean anything.

This room does not mean anything. And see how we label things and begin to view our perception through this filter of labels, of judgments, of ideas, opinions, whatever they are. And that's how we see it.

So when I was younger and being teased, that's all that people could see. And we even do this probably daily, especially if you've been married for a long time. You may come to your partner and you're viewing them through all the experiences that you've had with your partner, all maybe the hurts, all the ups and downs, and you no longer see the being that he or she is.

Yes. And we do this all the time, and it's beginning then to recognize when we do that. Can we let it go?

Can we just drop the veil? Drop all thoughts. I mean, thoughts are useful.

They bring in a form of communication, but that's all it is. It's a pointer. Can we let go of every thought and see that it's not real?

No thought can possibly be real. The only reason why you can understand me is because we have agreed that certain sounds make up a meaning. See how we give it meaning?

If you were in another country, you wouldn't understand at all. One of the best talks that I have been to with Eckhart was in Germany, the very first time we went to Germany, and he didn't think he could do a talk in German, although he spoke Deutsch. He didn't think he could use words to, like consciousness and all that sort of stuff in German.

So they had a translator to translate, and he did one talk, but it really felt like it just wasn't working. Translation wasn't working, because you know when Eckhart gets on a roll, I mean, he can get on a roll and it's hard to stop. When he stops, it's like the flow stops, the energy stops, so the second talk, which would have been a three-hour talk, he says, I have to do it in English.

I think enough German people understand English, and I'm just gonna have to do it in English. I can't have the translation. So anyway, so he started the talk off speaking German just to tell them that he was going to do the talk in English.

There was not gonna be any translation. So anyways, 20 minutes into the talk, he realized, I'm still talking German. So I'm gonna continue speaking German until I just can't do it anymore.

He did a three-hour talk in German, and at first I was like, oh boy, I'm disappointed. Like I can't understand anything, but then there's that surrender that happened, and all I can do is just be still. And I realized, I thought, oh my gosh, how often I've sat there listening to him, listening to the words, when really I just needed to listen and be in that stillness, listen to the space, the silence between the words.

It's just like in music. Music is half sound and half silence, and that's what makes it so great is that stillness. Well, that was the best talk I had ever been to.

Really, sincerely, just feeling that stillness. I walked out of there so high. It was just like, wow, okay, you can speak any language you want.

It doesn't matter. And we do this even in our everyday lives. We will put more of our attention, in fact, 100% of our attention on words, on what the other person is saying, or what is externally happening outside, or even in our thinking.

It doesn't even have to be coming at us, the words. We can be thinking it. 100% of our attention goes outward.

When really, if we could just take a breath and tap into that source of who we are, that stillness, which is always right there, and that was the great discovery for me in that talk was that, wow, that stillness, it's always here, but my attention with the form of this moment, how much attention I give to the form is what covers that stillness up. So can we then practice keeping some of our attention on that still, small place within as we go about our daily lives? And trust that if there's really anything important that's happening out there, you'll end up giving more attention to it, but really, most of it, probably, I don't know, 97% of it, I mean, I've heard that 97% of all humans are dysfunctional, so I guess it must be 97% of everything out there must be pretty well dysfunctional, so why give it all of our attention and place our importance out there and forget about who we are in here and that this is the most important, that vital connection, that communion with the divine essence of who we are, and then when that connection happens, then perhaps the outer world begins to change, because we have changed, and I don't mean changed in the sense of stillness change, but that who we think we are dissolves into the nothingness, the nothingness of who we are.

Then absolute stillness remains, and then our perception of the world shifts, changes, and when we begin to look out there or hear and listen to what is out there, we also begin to perceive and listen to the space, to see the space. So we begin to see through what we've given meaning to, what we've labeled, so it's like seeing through the person. You're saying, I feel like he sees right through me.

He's seen beyond the person. So then we begin to play in this world, yes, in this form, yes, with our cultural conditioning, which is fine. It's not a problem.

It only becomes a problem when you become truly identified with it and you believe that it's true about yourself or true about the other person, and then the beauty of the uniqueness of the form shines through. So we have all different colors popping up, just like the flowers and the human beings, and you go, wow, isn't that beautiful? Instead of, well, that's different.

I'm not so sure, so I'm a little frightened about that. But we begin to interact, seeing past the meaning and into the light of consciousness, of who we are. I am no different than you are, and you are no different than I am at the deepest level.

Only in the world of form are we different, and that's what is so beautiful as well. If we didn't have any mirrors to see ourselves in, we wouldn't be able to see our own face, but what I see is your face, and I would think that you are me. So resist nothing.

Feel everything completely, demanding nothing to be different than what is here now. Because quite often, it's really not so bad out there. It's more in here that makes it bad.

Nothing is neither good or bad, but thinking makes it so. So wherever and whatever you are feeling in this moment, you feel, you fully accept. And we'll do a little meditation of resist nothing.

The new CD that's out by Sounds True, and it's called Resist Nothing, and on that are several different meditations just to assist you, help you just to be present with whatever is that's going on for you in your life, situation, and we all have something going on sometime or another. And what's interesting is that after I, did this CD, my life has been pretty kind of even, not much up, not much down. There's some like this.

And it's easy to kind of be with something that goes like this, isn't it? It's quite easy. Oh, I could ride this wave.

It's quite easy. Very, and then suddenly, it was just like right after the CD, it was just like something just peaked, and it's like, whoa, my rollercoaster went right up. And it's like, wow, okay.

All right, I can do this. But it gave me another appreciation that, wow, when the rollercoaster is really high, so when things, something that happens in your life to bring up, to intensify that emotion or intensify whatever is going on that brings about some emotions, to really have to be with that, I began to appreciate, again, just how challenging it can be just to be present with something that is so intense and not expect it to dissolve so quickly. So if you listen to that CD, there's this thing where I say, and it can still happen. Believe me, it still can, because I have done this, was that oftentimes, if emotion is felt fully and completely, it can dissolve in 30 seconds.

And, you know, it was pretty good. I was getting pretty good at that until. That something happened where I had to really begin to say, okay, wow, wow, okay, I've got to, this is not taking 30 seconds.

I've got to be with this more and longer for whatever reason, and without going into the head about it, about why is this not changing, because as soon as I did that, realizing that, wow, okay, no, I have to listen to my own teaching and accept this moment fully, like as if I were going to experience this for eternity. And that's the moment that it begins to dissolve or change in that full acceptance. So when you do that, you just, something arises, step back just for a moment.

Close your eyes if you wish, and just drop into whatever it is that you feel. In this moment, you can try it now. Now, just observing, feeling what it is that you are feeling.

Take a breath into your body, into the sensations. Become aware of your breathing. Become aware of the sensations.

Just notice how you are feeling, and perhaps a label comes up of what you're feeling. Agitation, sadness, happiness. The label isn't so important.

So once the label arises, you just let that go and just feel, resisting nothing. Notice how you're holding your body. Are you holding?

Can you relax? If thoughts arise, just notice and let them go. Don't give any meaning to what is arising, to what is in you, but simply feel.

What does this emotion feel like? Be with the sensation of the emotion. Be with the sensation of this moment.

Judge nothing, labeling nothing, giving meaning to nothing. So no meaning to anything. Simply be, experience this moment.

And once you feel, experience what it is that you are feeling, sense into that space, the stillness in which the sensations arise, in which the thoughts arise. Just watching, feeling. There's nothing to do, nothing to get, but simply be, resisting nothing.

And if you notice that there's resistance there, then you be with that, dropping the label of resistance and feel the sensation. What does resistance feel like? What does it do to my body?

Brings tension and contraction. Can I even be with that tension and contraction? And the moment that's fully accepted, something in you shifts.

For all forms are impermanent. Breathing, neither running to or running away from what is, but simply be with what is. Any movement towards it, any movement away from it is resistance.

Can you feel that space? Can you feel that emotion, that sensation? The two are really inseparable, but only one is real.

If you're wondering how long this meditation is gonna go on for, you're in your thinking mind. If you're wondering how long you're gonna feel this sensation or feel an emotion, you're in your thinking mind. To be fully present in this moment requires the acceptance of whatever it is that shows up for you in this moment.

Neither past or future are real. What's real? What's real?

And tapping into that stillness, staying with that stillness, when you're ready, you can gently open your eyes, yet keeping some attention inward. And with that attention inward, and yet the outer form exists, is the true union, the true marriage, where the two become one. So the marriage is not out there between people.

It's between you as the form and God as that inner stillness within. That's the true marriage. That's the true merging.

So then we move about the world as this one singular movement. We have form and we have the stillness together in this world. And then we can dance this way.

In the dance, it's much more fluid, flowing. And still, we bring stillness then into this world. Rather than the separation, the separation is forgetting about the stillness.

It no longer exists, and all you are is this thinking entity, a body and mind. Instead of the trinity of bringing in that stillness. So then we live in this world and not be of this world.

As you can imagine Christ on the cross, and the world is the horizontal plane. And yet the connection is the divine essence of who you are, is the vertical dimension of that cross. And here you are in this world.

We're hidden there, all right? We can't go anywhere. I mean, we're in this body.

The temple, the church is your body. And we are the body of Christ. Christ consciousness, the divine consciousness.

So our connection still is that, is here, vertically. And yet we are in this world. Yes, pinned there on the cross.

Can't go anywhere. No way out. Can't.

Absolutely no way out. But then is there a way out? And that is through the dimension of Christ consciousness.

Of your connection, your marriage, your communion with the stillness within you. God is not outside, but God is within. It's the only place.

So it doesn't matter about these temples and churches. Yes, they're beautiful. And yes, there could be a space, which that's all it is, is a space to go so where you can go and commune.

But really, that space, if all those churches and temples were just blown to bits, all you have is yourself, which you are the temple. You are the body of Christ. And we embody Christ.

Or we're gonna embody the ego. You cannot have both. You cannot serve two gods.

God the Father or the God of the world. Can't have it both ways. We think we can for a while, but it only leads to suffering.

And all paths, whether you do the path of suffering, the path of devotion, the path of knowledge, all lead to the divine essence of who we are. And we'll see what happens. Will it be boring?

I doubt it. Only when you get bored is when you know that you're in the mind. We need to get to that place where there's this little sort of, I don't know if you call it a joke, but I've said this before, I've used this before, was that there's this famous English writer who was at a cocktail party.

And somebody came up to him and said, are you enjoying yourself here? And the famous English writer says, it's the only thing that I'm enjoying here. So, are you enjoying yourself here?

I don't hear anything, oh no. It's the only thing that you should be enjoying here. And that's yourself.

The true joy comes from within. Anything that makes you happy or laugh that's outside you, it's temporary, but what can bubble inside you continuously comes from within. Even in the midst of sadness or grief or loss of a loved one, there can be peace.

You can feel that sadness yet feel peace. And when your commitment is to this divine essence of who you are, then you use every single opportunity as a spiritual awakening, as a deepening. I'm faced with that, this moment, these days, with probably two potential beings that I love so dearly, whose lifespan in their bodies will be soon, will be coming to an end.

And that's my father, who's 88 years old. And he's ready. He says, I'm ready.

I'm ready to go. And our beloved Maya, who has a heart condition and we know that she will sooner or later leave body. And using this opportunity as a deepening spiritually, contemplating death, as we all have to sooner or later contemplate our own deaths, and feeling the beauty and the essence being with that essence.

And really the form passes away, but who we are at the core is eternal. We are eternity. Oh, I have to tell you guys this.

We drove from Vancouver to here and we were like stopped overnight in Red Bluff. And we went to a restaurant to have dinner. And somehow we got to talking about Eckhart's father who left body, I think about five years ago.

And Eckhart said, he mentioned about his father's ego. Because he had, even though he was very spiritual in a sense, he still had this big ego at times. And when he said that, the glass of water that was full of water and ice, burst.

It literally just, poof, burst. And we went, okay. We kind of forgot about what we were talking about.

We wondered what, wow, what was that? We didn't even touch it. And everyone was coming over that work there and they're like, oh yeah, well if you put it down maybe too hard.

And we go, we didn't touch it. It was nothing, we didn't do anything. It just burst.

And then I said, what were we talking about just before that happened? And we realized we were talking about his father and his ego. So he didn't like that.

So he may have left body, but he was definitely with us. And that, the experience of, of just feeling that energy, because it's energy. It's like water.

You boil water, yet all it does is change form. So the essence of who we are is of the one life. Is eternal.

Is stillness. With no limitations, no borders, nothing. The space.

So if you can imagine this universe, this space, we are at that space. And we would not recognize who we are as space consciousness if we were not in form. And we wouldn't know that space existed if there was no forms.

It'd be, what name could we give it? There'd be no even dimension to it. So we are awakening consciousness through the form.

We're recognizing ourselves. But from the moment we are born, we are taught to forget about ourself and begin to identify with our name. Oh, they keep calling me Johnny or Alice.

Oh, and they're looking at me. That must be me. Because they say I'm supposed to call them mommy and daddy.

That's who they are, is mommy and daddy. No, it's not. So we're coming back home to

recognize and be in that space.

And that's the flowering. That's the purpose of our life. And there's no other purpose.

And I still have to even remind myself about that. There's no other purpose but just to recognize that space. There's nothing for me to do.

Sometimes I still wonder what I'm gonna do when I grow up. Honestly. I'm just like, well, what am I supposed to do?

Wow, I've got, you know, because contemplating now with my father being ill and with Maya being ill, it's like this contemplation of, geez, I've only got so many maybe years or minutes left on this planet in this form. What do I wanna do? And then it's like, oh, come on.

Just be, just be, just be still and move from that. And whatever it is that I'm supposed to be doing, it's only in this moment that I'm doing it. So what's the quality that you will bring to this moment?

Am I going to infuse this moment and what I'm doing in this moment in my thinking mind? Or am I going to create and infuse whatever I'm doing with presence? With just finding that inner stillness in this moment with whatever it is I am doing.

That's our work. That's our realization. That's our creation.

That's our creation is in this moment now. Not what I'm going to do in the future, but how am I bringing this moment into creation? Stillness or with thinking about it?

[Speaker 4] (3:12:34 - 3:12:54)

Today at Cartoli on Super Soul Sunday, it was one of the most exciting, eye-opening and meaningful moments of my career. Right now, you all are online with me from every corner on our planet. They say we practically crashed the internet when more than a million people logged on to watch.

[Speaker 11] (3:12:55 - 3:12:56)

Hi Oprah, hi Eckhart.

[Speaker 4] (3:12:56 - 3:16:36)

Learn and study with one of the great spiritual thinkers of our time, Eckhart Tolle. The world can't make you happy. Things cannot give you happiness.

It still thrills me to think about it. I just love that. I loved it so much, I wrote, wow.

Now Eckhart is back, and today you're going to see him in a whole new light. That's the

first time anybody has said that. So get ready.

This was fun. Yes. Because Super Soul Sunday with Eckhart Tolle starts now.

I wanted a place for people to go every Sunday to wake up, thought provoking. Oh, you couldn't have said that better. Eye-opening and inspiring.

This is my favorite thing to talk about. This will lift you right on up. It's food for your soul.

Every single Sunday. This is Super Soul Sunday. The weekly webcast that Eckhart Tolle and I did together back in 2008, I describe as my first life class, teaching one of my favorite books of all time, A New Earth, chapter by chapter.

Millions of people got to know Eckhart during those 10 weeks, but not everyone knows his remarkable spiritual journey. At 29, this German-born author had become a research scholar in comparative literature at the University of Cambridge in England. Despite his academic success, it wasn't enough to halt bouts of anxiety and depression so severe that at one time he considered ending his life.

In his darkest hour, Eckhart says, he experienced an awakening that transformed his life. We'll hear more about that later. And he chose to walk away from his promising career to explore his newly discovered inner peace.

Eckhart's profound yet simple spiritual teachings are the basis for his best-selling books, The Power of Now and A New Earth. Too much time had passed since Eckhart and I sat down together, so I invited him back to Chicago to catch up, to reflect, and to have a Super Soul Sunday conversation. Ah, how fantastic is this?

So much has changed since we did A New Earth webcast. It was just four years ago, 2008. That was considered for me and our industry groundbreaking when we were broadcasting live around the world in our first webcast.

Remember that first night and people were Skyping in? We're like, oh, there's Brazil. Yes.

That first webcast was one of the, really, I think it was a seminal day for me because it said that our ability to, for me, doing this kind of work, using your voice to let people come closer to the one that is their own, that that was transmittable in a way around the world, in a way that we had never done before, but not only transmittable, but could actually be both physically, emotionally, and spiritually received. Yes.

Right now, we're on OWN, on the platform of the cable network. We're also streaming on Facebook. We're also on Oprah.com.

We're also on Oprah Radio, all at the same time, simulcasting as we speak what was cutting edge back then is now just normal. Yes. This is how we do it.

[Speaker 1] (3:16:36 - 3:16:36)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:16:36 - 3:16:44)

This is how we do it. Do you think technology is accelerating our consciousness or the opposite?

[Speaker 1] (3:16:45 - 3:17:25)

I think both are happening at the moment. I can see the negative effects of technology that it has, can have, and has on many, especially young people who get addicted to their devices, the computer, and the smartphones, and so on, so our mind can get totally filled up with useless facts, and so that can prevent us from actually being able to pay attention to what is here in the present moment. The most important ability a human being can have is to direct his or her full attention to the present moment.

[Speaker 4] (3:17:25 - 3:17:59)

Absolutely, absolutely. So there are obviously wonderful things, the fact that we can communicate now, hello world, with everybody throughout the world who is seeking this information. That's a good thing, and obviously there are dangers, particularly for people raising children in this environment.

One of the things that you did after the New Earth seminars, you wrote a book called Oneness with All Life, a companion to a new Earth, which says many of the things that are in New Earth, but it's not like a summarized version of New Earth.

[Speaker 12] (3:17:59 - 3:17:59)

Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (3:18:00 - 3:18:54)

Okay, now this is what I loved from Oneness with All Life. This is also right next to my bed, my signed copy from you. You say through the present moment, you have access to the power of life itself, the power of life itself, that which has traditionally been called God, which I thought is such a beautiful definition of God, the power of life itself.

As soon as you turn away from it, God ceases to be a reality in your life, and all you're left with is the mental concept of God, the mental concept, which is what a lot of people talk about, the mental concept of God, their belief in God. And what you go on to say is, which some people believe in and others deny. Even belief in God is only a poor substitute for the living reality of God manifesting every moment of your life.

[Speaker 1] (3:18:55 - 3:18:55)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:18:55 - 3:18:59)

I think that is such a beautiful offering for Super Soul Sunday.

[Speaker 1] (3:19:00 - 3:19:23)

Yes, it's stepping from belief, which is fine, going to the deeper level where belief becomes an actual realization or a knowing. And that can start with a simple thing like, and anybody can verify that in their own experience. How?

When you take your attention into the present moment, which implies, of course, a certain alertness arises.

[Speaker 4] (3:19:23 - 3:19:24)

Yes, yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:19:24 - 3:19:50)

Which is different from thinking. Thinking compared to that is almost like a kind of dreamlike state. You're up here, not present here.

So a certain alertness arises, you become more conscious of what surrounds you. But also, strangely, it's hard to talk about it, but I will, of a sense of presence that is both within and without.

[Speaker 4] (3:19:50 - 3:19:50)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:19:50 - 3:19:55)

A presence. We could call that a divine presence.

[Speaker 4] (3:19:56 - 3:19:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:19:57 - 3:19:58)

There is something.

[Speaker 4] (3:19:59 - 3:20:05)

And that presence, what everybody needs to know, is the presence that you feel when

you're able to silence your mind.

[Speaker 1] (3:20:05 - 3:20:06)

Silence your mind.

[Speaker 4] (3:20:07 - 3:20:13)

And be aware of the silence that's in your mind. You are that awareness.

[Speaker 1] (3:20:13 - 3:20:13)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:20:14 - 3:20:15)

Disguised as a person.

[Speaker 1] (3:20:15 - 3:20:42)

Yes. And when you become conscious of the gap between two thoughts, for example, or even now, sometimes I even recommend to people that they hold their hands like this, and they create this, let's say, past is there, future is there, you let them go, and now you bring your attention to just the present. It can be a little reminder to help you hold that sense of presence.

[Speaker 4] (3:20:42 - 3:20:48)

And to recognize that the past is here, and the future is here, and that the only moment that matters is right now.

[Speaker 1] (3:20:48 - 3:20:51)

The only thing you ever have is now.

[Speaker 4] (3:20:51 - 3:20:53)

The only thing that matters is now.

[Speaker 1] (3:20:53 - 3:20:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:20:54 - 3:21:13)

I mean, I learned so much from that experience with you, the 10 weeks. It was like, it was the original life class. It is from which all the other life classes have stemmed.

And one of the most important things that I learned is that we all have the ability to

awaken, correct?

[Speaker 1] (3:21:13 - 3:21:14)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:21:14 - 3:21:19)

Yes. And that if we don't awaken as a species, that the species will eventually.

[Speaker 1] (3:21:20 - 3:21:41)

Yes, I see it as the next step in our evolution as a species is to embrace that state of consciousness that we call awakening. And if we don't, then the problems that the unawakened mind has created on the planet will only increase and multiply.

[Speaker 4] (3:21:42 - 3:22:03)

Coming up, Eckhart and I get to the heart of what an aha moment really is. Only spirit can recognize spirit. That's what an aha moment is, isn't it?

Super Soul Sunday. We'll be right back.

[Speaker 5] (3:22:21 - 3:23:37)

Meditation is a gift because you can do it anytime, anywhere, in any location, quieten your mind and get in touch with your soul. You can improve your health, you can manage stress, improve the quality of your sleep, your creative process, the way you deal with people, your personal relationships. In other words, you're on your way to a happier, healthier human being with more abundance in your consciousness than you were ever before because of meditation.

If your child is over 10 years, they can join in the 21-day challenge for meditation. If your child is five years, then just tell them to keep quiet for five minutes every day. Not say a word.

At six years, six minutes. Seven years, seven minutes. Eight years, eight minutes.

Nine years, nine minutes. 10 years, teach them proper meditation just like you and me. The best advice I can give to anyone who's starting the 21-day meditation challenge is just do it, spend the time.

And if you do it, all will be well. Don't worry about whether you're doing it right or not. Just spend the time.

Put in the time.

[Speaker 11] (3:23:40 - 3:24:34)

Let me see, strawberry lavender, big honey baby, Asian champere, raspberry habanero. I'm the jam lady. I was a punk rock drummer and then the band broke up and you have to reinvent yourself.

When I first moved to California, in the backyard was this really prosperous orange tree. So I started making marmalade and I would send it home to my friends. They're like, this is the best jam ever.

I'm really excited with all the rains because I'm like, oh my God, everybody's fruit trees are going to be blowing up. A lot of my flavor profiles are just things I see at the farmer's market. There'll be like a strawberry, but right next to it, it'll be lavender.

I started testing things. It takes a long time to cook jam. I really do have crazy jam fans.

Before, I would walk around Chicago. It was like, yeah, drummer lady. And now it's like, hey, it's the jam lady.

Who's not happy when they're eating jam?

[Speaker 3] (3:24:38 - 3:25:02)

Super Soul Sunday has got viewers raving. Dawn posted, Super Soul Sunday has given birth to a new and peaceful way to watch television. Janie wrote, thank you so much for the best TV I've ever watched.

And Raven tweeted, this is how I refresh my soul and get ready for another wonderfully busy week. Be a part of the global experience. Super Soul Sunday is simulcasting worldwide on OWN, Facebook, and Oprah.com.

[Speaker 4] (3:25:02 - 3:25:03)

This was fun!

[Speaker 3] (3:25:03 - 3:25:08)

Super Soul Sunday, every Sunday, 11 a.m. 10 central, only on OWN.

[Speaker 4] (3:26:10 - 3:26:32)

One of the things that you say is that stress is wanting something to be the way that it isn't. So how do you know the difference between something isn't the way that I want it to be and I need to accept it, because you say what you resist persists. How do you know whether you're supposed to accept it or try to bring about change for whatever it is that you want to change?

[Speaker 1] (3:26:32 - 3:27:00)

First, you accept, even if change is possible, and you may need to focus some attention on the situation to realize what kind of steps you can take to change the situation. But in the meantime, the basis for effective action is to come into an inner alignment with the is-ness of this moment. This is how it is.

Let's say I gave the example in The Power of Now, I'm stuck in the mud, just as an example. This is the situation right now.

[Speaker 4] (3:27:00 - 3:27:05)

I'm so pissed off, I'm stuck in the mud. Damn this mud, how'd I get in this mud?

[Speaker 1] (3:27:05 - 3:27:10)

Oh, yes, or you become a victim in your own mind. Why did this happen?

[Speaker 4] (3:27:10 - 3:27:10)

There's always mud.

[Speaker 1] (3:27:10 - 3:27:16)

Why is there mud here? Why is this happening to me, always to me, and so on. Victim identity, complaining.

[Speaker 4] (3:27:17 - 3:27:20)

Yeah, what is the mud in your life? So you're just saying, using that as a metaphor.

[Speaker 1] (3:27:20 - 3:27:41)

Yes, but just look at the situation without labeling it. This is where I am right now, and you accept that this is how it is, the is-ness of life at this moment. And now, I will begin to think about how to change it.

And then you become, actually, a greater intelligence arises, because you become present with what is.

[Speaker 4] (3:27:42 - 3:27:54)

So if you're stuck in the mud, and you're angry about being stuck in the mud, and you're trying to resolve being stuck in the mud, from that point of anger, you will always remain stuck in the mud. Yes, yes. You gotta remove yourself from the mud.

[Speaker 1] (3:27:54 - 3:27:55)

That's right.

[Speaker 4] (3:27:55 - 3:28:14)

I got that. Okay, one of the things that you write in the very beginning of the book is that if you come across passages in this book that you feel are powerful, I want you to realize that what you're feeling is your own spiritual power. That is to say, who you are in your essence.

Only spirit can recognize spirit. That's what an aha moment is, isn't it?

[Speaker 1] (3:28:14 - 3:28:43)

Yes, it's always a recognition. The real truths of life are never entirely new to you or to anybody, because there is a level deep down within you where you already know all the things, all those spiritual truths that you read or hear, and then recognize them. I say recognize, because you're not, it's not new, ultimately, it's not new information.

You're very so- It's a resonance. Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:28:43 - 3:28:49)

It's a resonance. It's a resonating with what is somehow buried or suppressed.

[Speaker 1] (3:28:49 - 3:28:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:28:49 - 3:28:50)

That's what an aha is.

[Speaker 1] (3:28:51 - 3:28:51)

That's right.

[Speaker 4] (3:28:51 - 3:29:08)

So when you do hear something, like from what we're talking about this Sunday morning, and you want to tweet-tweet it, the reason it resonates with you, the reason it is an aha, because that is spirit recognizing spirit. Yes. Your consciousness recognizing the consciousness of whatever that message is.

[Speaker 1] (3:29:08 - 3:29:08)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:29:09 - 3:29:09)

That's great.

[Speaker 1] (3:29:09 - 3:29:10)

And that's an awakening.

[Speaker 4] (3:29:11 - 3:29:12)

That's an awakening, yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:29:12 - 3:29:37)

And it also, it awakens that faculty in you. When there's a glimpse of recognition, then that knowing in you awakens, and then it grows. It comes to the surface more.

And the more it grows, the more open you are to hearing spiritual truths, and then you begin to live it in your life.

[Speaker 4] (3:29:37 - 3:30:09)

Absolutely. I think if the most important, if there was only one message, because I don't want to, you know, in the short time that we have this morning, to go over everything. It's impossible that we learn from new earth.

But if the essence of it, that if you wanted people to understand what the reason why you sat down and wrote that book, or that book wrote you, you said that book was burning inside you, right? The reason why you wanted to do it is because you want it to cause an awakening. Is that it?

[Speaker 1] (3:30:09 - 3:31:16)

Yes. Or one could say that it was kind of coming through me, so I just became the kind of almost the channel for it. So there was something in me that needed to write that book.

And I feel the essence of a new earth and of the power of now is the arising of the state of presence. And now for the first time, it is possible on a more widespread level for humans to undergo that shift in consciousness where they're no longer totally dominated by the continuous compulsive thinking in their heads, the voice that never stops talking. They're no longer totally in the grip of that because that's the old conditioned consciousness.

Something new arises, an inner spaciousness, a presence. And that presence transcends who you are as a person.

[Speaker 4] (3:31:17 - 3:31:21)

That's right. And it's what you call in the books going beyond thought.

[Speaker 1] (3:31:21 - 3:31:21)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:31:22 - 3:32:03)

All right, you say on page 13, see if you can catch, that is to say, notice the voice in the head. Whenever you notice that voice, you will also realize that you are not the voice, but the one who is aware of it. It's what you say in Stillness Speaks.

You are that awareness disguised as a person. Yes, yes. Wow, that's big.

I think, is that, would you say, is that, I know it's hard to measure your own words and your own work, but would you say that that is in terms of awakening and realization of your personal power, that that's really one of the most important things?

[Speaker 1] (3:32:03 - 3:32:08)

Yes, that is the most important thing. Feeling it for yourself, sensing it.

[Speaker 4] (3:32:08 - 3:32:09)

Yes, what one needs to know.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:10 - 3:32:27)

So the moment you become aware that you have certain kinds of thoughts in your head, there's already that awareness arising. There's still many people in this world who are so identified with every thought that arises in their head, there's not the slightest space of awareness there.

[Speaker 4] (3:32:27 - 3:32:27)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:27 - 3:32:32)

And they may not even be ready to hear what we are saying. It would be totally meaningless to them.

[Speaker 4] (3:32:32 - 3:32:46)

Yes, so you have to be ready to hear it. That's why you were saying, why I was saying earlier, quoting from the book, that if you hear something that connects to you, it means you're already awakening enough to be able to hear it, because it's only spirit that recognizes spirit.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:46 - 3:32:46)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:32:46 - 3:32:49)

Truth recognizes truth. Yes. There you are.

[Speaker 1] (3:32:49 - 3:33:12)

Yes, it's the deepest sense of beingness. I sometimes ask people, can you be aware of your own presence? Not thinking, not the thoughts that you're having, not the emotions that you're having, but the very presence of your very being.

You become aware of your own presence by sensing the entire energy field in your body that is alive.

[Speaker 8] (3:33:12 - 3:33:12)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:12 - 3:33:14)

And that is the totality of your presence.

[Speaker 4] (3:33:14 - 3:33:36)

Because you know that no matter what's going on, all the trials and difficulties and challenges and whatever, that all of us have from time to time in our life, if you live past five years old, that there is a space that you can go to. Yes. That really is the ultimate connection to all there is, or God.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:37 - 3:33:37)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:33:37 - 3:33:38)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:38 - 3:33:48)

Yes. That's where you and God merge. So then you recognize your oneness with a source of life.

[Speaker 4] (3:33:48 - 3:33:49)

Of source of life.

[Speaker 1] (3:33:49 - 3:33:49)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:33:49 - 3:34:50)

What I find is, if you can go to that space, that's where your strength, that's where your true strength lies. Yes. That's where your true creativity, your power, your ability to be authentically yourself, everything comes from that space.

And you wanna be able to bring that space to everything that you do. Yes. Yes.

And bring that space forward to inhabit who you are. Yes. To be conscious of that.

Yes. Yeah, I got that. I got that.

Coming up, Eckhart answers your Facebook questions. Good questions. Thanks, Laura.

Many people will be thankful for that question. Yes. And later, what do you do for fun?

Eckhart's answer may surprise you. For those of you watching on OWN, around the world and on the web, let me know how you stay present and in the moment. Facebook me or tweet, tweet.

We'll be back in a moment.

[Speaker 5] (3:35:01 - 3:36:42)

People who say I have no time to meditate are just the ones who should be meditating because they're basically making excuses to ruin their life. If you can brush your teeth, if you can take a shower, you can meditate. It's part of your daily routine.

And the fact is you will be accomplishing a lot more by doing less. So meditation is the ultimate law of least effort. If people get interrupted a lot, then at least if they're interrupted by adults, they can set aside the time to go to a room, put a sign outside, meditating for the next 20 minutes.

Please don't interrupt. If your mind doesn't quiet, don't try to quieten it. Just sit there going through the procedure, which I'll be guiding you through.

And you'll find that soon it'll quieten by itself. If you're a fidgeter in meditation, then you can fidget. If you fall asleep in meditation, that means you are not getting enough sleep, so you should get more sleep.

If you're stuck in traffic or in a situation where you can't actually close your eyes and meditate, just stop and observe the sensations in your body and then feel your body, smile inside, everywhere in your body. Observe your breath and you're practicing some kind of meditation right there.

[Speaker 8] (3:36:52 - 3:36:57)

Dance is creating art to music using your body.

[Speaker 7] (3:37:01 - 3:37:03)

Dance is an expression of your soul.

[Speaker 9] (3:37:08 - 3:37:14)

When you perform, you just completely forget about everything. You're in that moment.

[Speaker 2] (3:37:19 - 3:37:27)

Going into a world that no one else is in. It's a time to be free.

[Speaker 7] (3:37:37 - 3:37:54)

I am a ballet dancer. That's me.

[Speaker 4] (3:38:28 - 3:38:53)

When we told you Eckhart would be coming on Super Soul Sunday, we heard the collective digital cheer online. You told us you had questions for Eckhart and he happily agreed to take a few. Laura, one of our Facebook followers, wanted to know how to calm the voice in her head.

She writes, I feel like my mind is racing at enormous speed and at night it's even worse. How can I stop the constant stream of consciousness in my mind? Yeah, good question.

[Speaker 12] (3:38:54 - 3:38:54)

Thanks, Laura.

[Speaker 1] (3:38:54 - 3:39:04)

Many people will be thankful for that question. Yes. So, first of all, the question implies that you know that your mind won't stop.

[Speaker 4] (3:39:04 - 3:39:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:39:05 - 3:39:13)

If you are totally immersed, you're so identified with your mind, even the thought that your mind won't stop doesn't even occur to you because you become your mind.

[Speaker 4] (3:39:13 - 3:39:15)

You don't know that it is your mind that won't stop.

[Speaker 1] (3:39:15 - 3:39:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:39:15 - 3:39:18)

So, Laura, that's a big, that's, you're ahead of the game.

[Speaker 1] (3:39:18 - 3:39:18)

Okay.

[Speaker 4] (3:39:18 - 3:39:21)

The fact that Laura knows that her mind won't stop is a good thing.

[Speaker 1] (3:39:21 - 3:40:15)

It's a good start. So, when you hear the thought, why can't I stop my mind? Don't believe it because you can stop your mind.

How? You can choose to take your attention away from thinking. And the first thing you do as you lie there in bed, you ask yourself, can I feel the energy inside my hands?

Yeah. In other words, can I feel that my hands are there without touching anything? Yes.

Can I feel that there's an energy inside my hands? And after a little while, most people can. There's a slight tingling or liveness that you can feel when the energy goes in there.

And that's an enormous step that you've already taken because immediately thinking will slow down because it no longer has your whole attention. Got it. And then, see, can you incorporate the whole body?

[Speaker 4] (3:40:16 - 3:40:16)

The whole body.

[Speaker 1] (3:40:16 - 3:40:17)

Can you sense your legs and arms?

[Speaker 4] (3:40:17 - 3:40:22)

Yes. So why does that work and not just Laura saying to herself, let me think about something else?

[Speaker 1] (3:40:23 - 3:40:30)

There's no anchor then for presence and the mind has such momentum that you won't be able to stop it.

[Speaker 4] (3:40:31 - 3:40:31)

Got it.

[Speaker 1] (3:40:31 - 3:40:38)

You need an anchor for presence. And the inner body, as I call this, is a wonderful anchor for the state of presence.

[Speaker 4] (3:40:38 - 3:40:43)

Laura, I hope you got that too. That's why you just can't say, okay, I'm going to think about something else.

[Speaker 1] (3:40:43 - 3:40:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:40:43 - 3:40:45)

And then the wonderful... You have to actively...

[Speaker 1] (3:40:46 - 3:41:10)

Choose. Choose. Not about something else.

Just go into the body and then thinking slows down. You might even stop completely for a while. And the amazing thing is what before was an unpleasant, dreadful, sleepless night, within a few minutes can actually be transformed into a very pleasant experience of feeling the inherent aliveness in your whole body and you lie there.

[Speaker 4] (3:41:10 - 3:41:13)

Because and then you recognize, oh, I have slowed down.

[Speaker 1] (3:41:13 - 3:41:20)

You have slowed down and the mind will do very little. When you're really in the body, there's not much thinking anymore.

[Speaker 4] (3:41:20 - 3:41:30)

So another Facebooker wanted to know, this is closely related to what Laura said. How does one clear one's mind of bad memories? Can you clear your mind of bad memories?

[Speaker 1] (3:41:30 - 3:41:52)

Well, not as such, but you can recognize that bad memories are thoughts that are arising in your mind. And when you recognize that these are thoughts arising in your mind, you don't need to identify with the thoughts any longer. So memories, for example, of something bad that happened to you.

[Speaker 4] (3:41:52 - 3:41:52)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:41:53 - 3:41:55)

It's not happening here and now.

[Speaker 4] (3:41:55 - 3:41:57)

It's already happened. Yes. It's done.

[Speaker 1] (3:41:57 - 3:42:23)

Yes. So memories are thoughts that arise. They're not reality.

It's only when you believe that they are real, then they have the power over you. But when you realize it's just another thought arising about the past, then you find a space, a spacious relationship with thought. So thought no longer has you in its grip.

I call it sometimes...

[Speaker 4] (3:42:23 - 3:42:25)

I hope people really get that.

[Speaker 1] (3:42:25 - 3:42:25)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:42:25 - 3:42:28)

That would be a gift for somebody who's tortured by the past.

[Speaker 1] (3:42:28 - 3:42:59)

Yes. Another aspect of that, of course, is guilt, which has to do with something one did to someone or something that they failed to do but should have done. And so guilt arises.

But of course, who you were then, no human being can act beyond their level of consciousness. At that time, you acted like that. The awareness was not there to act

differently.

Now the awareness is there and the awareness is who you truly are.

[Speaker 4] (3:43:00 - 3:43:19)

Well, I think a lot of the reasons, any time I've ever felt guilty, it's because I kind of knew better. I knew better and didn't do it. There's nothing worse, I think, than being upset with yourself.

And you're upset with yourself not when you make a mistake, for me, I'm upset with myself when I make a mistake that I could have prevented.

[Speaker 1] (3:43:19 - 3:43:22)

Yes. Yes. But you didn't.

[Speaker 4] (3:43:22 - 3:43:23)

But I didn't.

[Speaker 12] (3:43:26 - 3:43:29)

But the ego...

[Speaker 4] (3:43:29 - 3:43:30)

But you didn't, so live with it.

[Speaker 1] (3:43:30 - 3:44:24)

Guilt is a strong way for the ego to strengthen itself because when you feel guilty about something, you identify, again, with certain thoughts in your mind, which is ego. And the thoughts say, I should have done better, I didn't do it, I, I, I. And every I thought that judges you, you identify with it, it becomes part of ego.

The ego loves guilt. It loves not only blaming others, that strengthens it too, if that doesn't work, you can blame yourself. But, of course, every human being has done things in the past that they now regret.

That's, I've done things that I regret, they were silly and stupid. And so, realizing the essence of who you are is, does not lie in the past, or thoughts about the past.

[Speaker 4] (3:44:24 - 3:44:26)

What matters is what you are willing to do now.

[Speaker 1] (3:44:26 - 3:44:28)

Oh, and you are the presence.

[Speaker 4] (3:44:28 - 3:44:30)

You are the presence.

[Speaker 1] (3:44:30 - 3:44:34)

You are the presence. Not any, no thought is who you are.

[Speaker 4] (3:44:34 - 3:44:49)

Yeah. Coming up, get ready to rethink your thoughts. Tell that thought, be gone with you, you have no power here.

You don't have to believe every thought that comes into your head. You don't. Super Soul Sunday, we'll be right back.

[Speaker 5] (3:44:55 - 3:45:27)

My shoes are made by a woman called Madison Steiner. She's a young woman in her 20s, she's a student. And she actually has a foundation, and she works to help children who are struggling with disabling problems, chronic illnesses, and including brain cancer.

And her effort is called Neat Peach. These are neat, and they're peachy.

[Speaker 7] (3:45:43 - 3:46:10)

We're on a mission to tackle life's big questions. I'm Golriz. And I'm Devin.

And this is SoulPancake. It can be all too easy to stress out over things we can't control. So, SoulPancake headed to a park with a giant balloon to give people an unusual way to just let go.

[Speaker 2] (3:46:48 - 3:46:54)

I wrote about anxiety, like pressure and things like that. Financial issues, money problems.

[Speaker 4] (3:46:55 - 3:46:57)

Student loans. I've been backed up for years on these.

[Speaker 2] (3:46:57 - 3:46:59)

I wrote menopause.

[Speaker 11] (3:46:59 - 3:47:02)

Writing about women. Hopefully find one that matches with me.

[Speaker 2] (3:47:02 - 3:47:08)

It's been a pretty tough journey having cancer, but I need it to be gone. Out of my life.

[Speaker 7] (3:47:42 - 3:47:49)

The physical act of writing it down and then watching it fly away, it was pretty cool. It made me feel really good.

[Speaker 11] (3:47:49 - 3:47:53)

To see them go away and just to reflect on a deeper level what it meant, it felt good.

[Speaker 8] (3:47:53 - 3:47:58)

It was nice to be able to get it off my chest and let it go and see it pop and fly away.

[Speaker 4] (3:48:07 - 3:48:27)

This is one of my favorite quotes from page 64. You do not become good by trying to be good, but by finding the goodness that is already within you and allowing that goodness to emerge. Again, we're talking about going to presence, the divine within you, and bringing that forth to whatever it is you do.

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:48:27 - 3:48:33)

Because trying to be good is often to improve one's self-image.

[Speaker 4] (3:48:33 - 3:48:35)

Right. That's ego-driven.

[Speaker 1] (3:48:35 - 3:49:10)

Ultimately, it's ego. Some people, for example, have been trying for centuries to love their neighbor as themselves. Right.

But most of them have been finding it very difficult. Because love your neighbor as yourself really means, first of all, you need to be in touch with yourself, the self that you are beyond the form, the consciousness that you are. Then you can love your neighbor as yourself because you recognize your oneness with your neighbor.

[Speaker 4] (3:49:10 - 3:49:21)

Yes. What you're saying is, that's so beautiful. I get it.

Lots of bing-bing-aha's here. Love your neighbor as yourself, as you're interpreting it, is not as yourself the personality.

[Speaker 12] (3:49:22 - 3:49:22)

No.

[Speaker 4] (3:49:22 - 3:49:35)

Not as yourself who's out there mowing the lawn. Not as yourself. It doesn't mean if you go to the theater, give your neighbor tickets to the theater, or whatever.

It means the deeper always. Yes. Inner self.

Yes. Higher self.

[Speaker 1] (3:49:36 - 3:50:18)

Yes. So love, I call love the recognizing yourself in the other. And yourself, your essential self, is consciousness.

Got it. Then I begin, when I then meet people and interact with people, I see them on two levels, or feel them on two levels. On one level, they are the form.

Yes. Which is the body and their psychological makeup. Correct.

On another level, they are the consciousness that I also am. Because underlying the body and the mind is the consciousness out of which the body and the mind have come. And that is still there.

That pure essence.

[Speaker 4] (3:50:18 - 3:50:20)

You see that in every person that you encounter.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:20 - 3:50:31)

Yes. Yeah. And that makes it much easier to interact with people and much more pleasant because sometimes the personality, the psychological makeup, is not that wonderful.

[Speaker 4] (3:50:32 - 3:50:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:33 - 3:50:42)

And then one is able to let that be because you can sense that beyond that, there is an essence to that human being.

[Speaker 4] (3:50:42 - 3:50:54)

That's what I mean when I am going into interviews, particularly that I think might be, you know, challenging. I will consciously meditate on the thought of the presence in me, speak to the presence in you.

[Speaker 1] (3:50:54 - 3:50:54)

Oh, yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:50:54 - 3:51:00)

That's wonderful. Yeah. Yes.

Because that's what I'm really looking for. Yes. That underlying thing.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:00 - 3:51:01)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:01 - 3:51:07)

That we all have. That oneness that we all have. That's right.

Which, as you know, that's when you get the best conversation.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:07 - 3:51:07)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:08 - 3:51:13)

What is your own personal spiritual practice? Do you have one?

[Speaker 1] (3:51:13 - 3:51:16)

I don't have a practice as such.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:16 - 3:51:17)

Do you meditate?

[Speaker 1] (3:51:19 - 3:51:27)

Not in a formal sense, but sometimes I sit and just be without doing anything.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:27 - 3:51:29)

I want everybody to know that you can just do that.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:29 - 3:51:30)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:30 - 3:51:43)

There was a wonderful line in the book, I can't remember where you said it, that stillness, I think it is stillness is the voice of God or stillness is how God speaks to us. Does anybody know where that quote is? 140.

140.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:44 - 3:51:49)

Stillness is the language God speaks. Everything else is a bad translation.

[Speaker 4] (3:51:49 - 3:51:55)

Oh, that's right. You wrote the book. Why not?

Say it again.

[Speaker 1] (3:51:56 - 3:52:14)

Stillness is the language God speaks. Everything else is a bad translation. And of course, in stillness you get closest to the source of life, which is God and which is essentially yourself.

[Speaker 4] (3:52:14 - 3:52:15)

Which is the one.

[Speaker 1] (3:52:15 - 3:52:16)

The one.

[Speaker 4] (3:52:16 - 3:52:37)

I love calling God the one now. The one. Yes.

I know you told my producers that it's wonderful to meditate. You have meditated. Sometimes you do meditate.

But meditation isn't the end all be all because there are a lot of people who go in and meditate and there's 20 minutes of let me connect to presence.

[Speaker 12] (3:52:37 - 3:52:37)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:52:37 - 3:52:43)

Then they get up from that 20 minutes and they are unconscious the rest of the 2340, right?

[Speaker 1] (3:52:44 - 3:52:50)

So their daily life is not interspersed with presence and space.

[Speaker 4] (3:52:50 - 3:52:56)

That's like people who go to church on Sunday and then leave church and come home and kick the dog.

[Speaker 1] (3:52:56 - 3:52:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:52:57 - 3:52:57)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:52:57 - 3:53:03)

That's why I often say meditation is, of course, wonderful. It's not for everybody.

[Speaker 4] (3:53:03 - 3:53:04)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:53:04 - 3:53:55)

But for many people it will be very helpful. But even more important than meditation, and especially those people who don't meditate and don't want to meditate, bring in little spaces of aware presence into everyday life. Choose a few things that you use as vehicles for bringing in presence.

For example, when you get into your car, you close the door. Why not spend 30 seconds just, for example, being aware of your breathing, which is another beautiful way of bringing that inner space, that presence into your life. Yes.

30 seconds is not that much. Even the busiest person can do that. Yes.

If they believe their minds, which their mind might say, I have no time for this now, but you don't have to believe every thought that comes into your head.

[Speaker 4] (3:53:55 - 3:53:56)

It's just a thought.

[Speaker 1] (3:53:56 - 3:53:56)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:53:57 - 3:54:00)

Tell that thought, be gone with you. You have no power here.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:00 - 3:54:03)

You don't have to believe every thought that comes into your head.

[Speaker 4] (3:54:03 - 3:54:04)

You don't. Because it's just a thought.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:05 - 3:54:05)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:54:05 - 3:54:06)

That's right.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:06 - 3:54:15)

For many people, no sense of spaciousness, presence inside at all. It's like living in a room that's crammed full with furniture. Yes.

[Speaker 4] (3:54:15 - 3:54:35)

And I think of people who live their whole lives and hopefully this opportunity to join us on Super Soul Sunday starts to give a little crack of the space for people. That's my whole heart's desire is to do that for people. Yes.

Coming up. They all thought Eckhart has lost his mind. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (3:54:36 - 3:54:37)

And in a way you did. They were right.

[Speaker 4] (3:54:38 - 3:54:43)

We'll talk about the moment Eckhart says changed his life back in a moment.

[Speaker 7] (3:55:03 - 3:55:22)

We're on a mission. To tackle life's big questions. I'm Golriz.

And I'm Devin. And this is SoulPancake. It can be really hard to find a sense of calm, especially when life gets chaotic.

[Speaker 9] (3:55:30 - 3:55:39)

So, SoulPancake headed to one of the busiest streets in Hollywood to create an unusual space where people could find a few minutes of calm amidst the chaos.

[Speaker 7] (3:55:40 - 3:56:57)

We've got these little diagrams here and we're trying to put all of this pipe together and we've got X's and O's and little things. So, let's see how it goes. We called it the Zen Den and invited people in.

We're here. We're here. We're here.

We're here. We're here. We're here.

We're here. We're here. We're here.

We're here. We're here. We're here.

[Speaker 12] (3:57:00 - 3:57:00)

We're here.

[Speaker 11] (3:58:04 - 3:58:08)

Well, you're centered, ready to go. I wish I could do this every day.

[Speaker 6] (3:58:08 - 3:58:11)

I was weird enough to be a good situation.

[Speaker 4] (3:58:17 - 3:58:30)

Today was a very stressful day because I'm job searching and I was feeling a little down, a little weak, and then I got asked to do this. So just gave me some more hope that I'm not finished yet. I keep going.

[Speaker 3] (3:58:42 - 3:58:54)

What is the soul?

[Speaker 1] (3:58:56 - 3:59:14)

The soul is one of the words one can use to talk about your innermost being, the presence that you are beyond form, that which underlies the personality and the mind, the essence of who you are.

[Speaker 4] (3:59:14 - 3:59:21)

Have you always considered yourself a spiritual person or did you have an aha moment when you recognized your connection to something bigger than yourself?

[Speaker 1] (3:59:21 - 3:59:49)

I had a big aha moment where I disidentified from my mind and disidentified from the unhappy self that I was. You were suicidal. Yes.

So there was a mind created, unhappy sense of self, and somehow I separated from it. It happened, just happened, and realized that that is not who I am.

[Speaker 4] (3:59:49 - 3:59:51)

Was that what people call a nervous breakdown?

[Speaker 1] (3:59:52 - 4:00:03)

No, it was a state of acute anxiety which could have become a nervous breakdown or could have become suicide. So it was moving in that direction.

[Speaker 4] (4:00:03 - 4:00:08)

It was moving in that direction, where you literally separated. Tell the story one more time.

[Speaker 1] (4:00:09 - 4:01:04)

Well, the thought, I was in bed at night again, where a lot of the mental suffering happens for many people at night. Couldn't sleep and plagued by dreadful thoughts, and the thought arose, I can't live with myself any longer. I can't live with myself any longer.

And then there must have come some awareness, although I didn't know what it was at the time, and the awareness looked at the thought and said, what does that mean, I can't live with myself? Are there two? Who is the I and who is the self that I cannot live with?

That question came up. The answer didn't come on the level of words. The answer came

as a separation suddenly of the self that I couldn't live with and the I, and the I was consciousness.

[Speaker 4] (4:01:04 - 4:01:05)

The awareness.

[Speaker 1] (4:01:05 - 4:01:08)

And the self was created by thoughts and emotions.

[Speaker 4] (4:01:09 - 4:01:10)

Yes, all those thoughts in the head.

[Speaker 1] (4:01:11 - 4:01:52)

And so then I recognized myself as consciousness, and so the self began to dissolve. The false sense of self, the unhappy me, the unhappy sense of self kind of crumbled. And all I knew suddenly, the next day I woke up, everything is so peaceful.

It took me years to understand what that actually was, that I had disidentified from the unhappy self, and I was simply there as a perceiving presence, which is a deeply peaceful way of being. So it was in London, England. So I walked around the streets going, wow, everything is so beautiful.

And there was just perceiving and peace underneath it.

[Speaker 4] (4:01:52 - 4:01:53)

Did your friends think you were nuts?

[Speaker 1] (4:01:55 - 4:02:04)

Some did. My mother did, especially when I then later walked out of my normal life.

[Speaker 4] (4:02:04 - 4:02:07)

So they all thought, Eckhart has lost his mind.

[Speaker 1] (4:02:07 - 4:02:09)

Yes. And in a way, you did, you did.

[Speaker 4] (4:02:10 - 4:02:17)

They were right, they were right. You did. How do you define spirituality versus religion?

What's the difference?

[Speaker 1] (4:02:18 - 4:02:38)

You can have religion with spirituality. You can also have religion without spirituality. Some people are so closely identified with their belief structure, they're really completely trapped in thinking.

And so there's no spaciousness. What we are doing here can actually be part of any religion.

[Speaker 4] (4:02:38 - 4:02:39)

Any religion, absolutely.

[Speaker 1] (4:02:40 - 4:02:41)

So as long as...

[Speaker 4] (4:02:41 - 4:02:44)

It can enhance the religion that you currently follow.

[Speaker 1] (4:02:44 - 4:02:44)

Yes, deepen it.

[Speaker 4] (4:02:45 - 4:02:45)

Deepen it.

[Speaker 1] (4:02:45 - 4:03:00)

Yes. For example, in Christianity, any Christian who wants to go deeper into their own religion and does not want to abandon their religion, there is enormous depth in Christian teaching in the words of Christ.

[Speaker 4] (4:03:02 - 4:03:07)

Absolutely. Everything that Christ came to teach is spirituality.

[Speaker 1] (4:03:07 - 4:03:08)

That's right.

[Speaker 4] (4:03:08 - 4:03:16)

That's what it is. Yes. Christ came to make manifest spirituality on earth.

What does prayer mean to you? Do you pray?

[Speaker 1] (4:03:17 - 4:03:29)

There's a saying that goes, if you talk to God, you pray. If God talks to you, you're insane. So it's very unlikely that God will speak to you in words, but...

[Speaker 4] (4:03:29 - 4:03:32)

Because God speaks through stillness.

[Speaker 12] (4:03:32 - 4:03:32)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:03:33 - 4:03:39)

That's where you find God. Yes. The Bible says, be still and know that I am God.

[Speaker 12] (4:03:39 - 4:03:39)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:03:39 - 4:03:40)

Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (4:03:40 - 4:03:48)

I think prayer to me could be called, I'm often in a state of listening, which really is an aspect of presence when you're just receptive.

[Speaker 4] (4:03:48 - 4:03:49)

That is your prayer.

[Speaker 1] (4:03:49 - 4:04:14)

Yes, like that. I could be like, it's wonderful just enjoying the presence that is there when you're not thinking and just being, just like this. And then when you become present, you become aware of a presence, a divine presence, both within and without.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:14 - 4:04:15)

Yes, in all things.

[Speaker 1] (4:04:15 - 4:04:18)

And that's why this is, I call it also prayer.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:18 - 4:04:22)

Prayer. So what do you do for fun?

[Speaker 1] (4:04:23 - 4:04:38)

Fun is every moment. I don't look for, where can I find some fun? Sometimes people ask me that and I cannot answer that question because I enjoy the present moment wherever I am.

And that's fun enough for me.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:40 - 4:04:42)

So you're having fun right now.

[Speaker 1] (4:04:42 - 4:04:43)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:43 - 4:04:43)

This is fun.

[Speaker 1] (4:04:44 - 4:04:44)

You are too.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:45 - 4:04:46)

I am too. You know I am.

[Speaker 1] (4:04:47 - 4:04:48)

I can see it.

[Speaker 4] (4:04:48 - 4:05:08)

You know I am. I know. That's what I feel too all the time.

Okay. That's really good. Coming up.

That cracks me up. That is an LOLer. I had no idea Eckhart could make me laugh so much.

And later, we find some breathing space at the dog beach. Back in a moment.

[Speaker 7] (4:05:16 - 4:06:10)

We're on a mission to tackle life's big questions. I'm Golriz. And I'm Devin.

And this is Soul Pancake. And now we gotta jump, jump. And now we gotta duck.

You go left. Go right. Made it.

Good job. All right. Ready?

It seems like every time we turn on the news, we're bombarded by negativity. And it can be hard not to let all that bad news drag us down. So Soul Pancake decided to switch it up and focus on all the good news in people's lives.

And this is good news. And now, over to you, Devin. Thanks, Devin.

I'm here with... My name is Tim Dunn. I'm from West Hartford, Connecticut.

[Speaker 12] (4:06:10 - 4:06:12)

Hello. Hi. How are you?

[Speaker 7] (4:06:12 - 4:06:13)

I'm good. How are you?

[Speaker 12] (4:06:13 - 4:06:15)

I'm good. Nice shoes.

[Speaker 7] (4:06:15 - 4:06:25)

They look comfortable and breathable. And what's your name? Ramsey.

What is one bit of good news that you've heard lately?

[Speaker 2] (4:06:25 - 4:06:29)

My grandson got a job. That was really good.

[Speaker 7] (4:06:29 - 4:06:37)

Actually, Ramsey's learning how to skateboard. And I think that's pretty, pretty tough business. Well, my sister, she actually got engaged to her boyfriend.

They've been together for like seven years.

[Speaker 4] (4:06:38 - 4:06:42)

My son got straight B's in school. It's great news. I was very proud of him.

[Speaker 2] (4:06:42 - 4:06:46)

My 16-year-old nephew, Eli, he's learning to sing. He's going to be on Broadway someday.

[Speaker 3] (4:06:50 - 4:06:59)

The best thing that happened to me this week was going to my sister's wedding in Las Vegas on Saturday. We had a 70s-themed wedding. So I actually got to have an afro again.

[Speaker 9] (4:07:00 - 4:07:05)

My friend, Yohan, was visiting from France. And he brought sausages on here.

[Speaker 2] (4:07:05 - 4:07:09)

I have a friend that I thought he was mad at me. And he said he wasn't. Now we're friends again.

[Speaker 9] (4:07:09 - 4:07:13)

That was really good. He kind of looks like a sausage. Hi.

[Speaker 3] (4:07:13 - 4:07:20)

Probably the thing that makes me the most happy is today, my daughter, my youngest daughter, just told me she's expecting a baby. So I'm going to be a grandfather for the first time.

[Speaker 2] (4:07:20 - 4:07:24)

In about two weeks, I am going to become a grandmother for the very first time.

[Speaker 8] (4:07:24 - 4:07:29)

The other good news is that I'm here with my best friend and husband of 52 years.

[Speaker 10] (4:07:30 - 4:07:36)

We were high school sweethearts. And now we just have reconnected, you know, after like 40 years. It's like being 16 again.

[Speaker 3] (4:07:37 - 4:07:42)

I got a lot of things to be happy about or positive about. And people are just positive with each other. And then I think it is contagious.

[Speaker 8] (4:07:42 - 4:07:53)

Just to breathe the air. Just to be alive. Just to be happy with who you are and what you do.

There's so much to just make your day perfect.

[Speaker 7] (4:07:54 - 4:08:01)

Oh, that's wonderful. Thank you for sharing that. Yeah, high five.

High five. High five? Yeah.

Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (4:08:13 - 4:08:20)

Where do you feel most at home or at peace?

[Speaker 1] (4:08:21 - 4:08:34)

Wherever I am in the stillness. That is wherever I go, the stillness is there. And that's my home.

I actually feel that being rooted in that as my home.

[Speaker 4] (4:08:34 - 4:08:36)

So are you always happy, Eckhart?

[Speaker 1] (4:08:36 - 4:08:46)

I don't call it happy, although I have used happy occasionally in the book. But it's more a state of peaceful aliveness.

[Speaker 4] (4:08:47 - 4:08:48)

Oh, I love that.

[Speaker 1] (4:08:48 - 4:08:48)

Yeah.

[Speaker 4] (4:08:49 - 4:08:51)

Yeah. Have you lost your ego?

[Speaker 1] (4:08:51 - 4:08:51)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:08:52 - 4:08:53)

You have completely?

[Speaker 1] (4:08:54 - 4:09:02)

Well, let's see. Who knows? Tomorrow it may suddenly appear again.

Let me know if it does. Because I wouldn't know it if it's really the ego.

[Speaker 4] (4:09:02 - 4:09:07)

Really? Because people, if you're acting in the ego, you don't even know it.

[Speaker 1] (4:09:07 - 4:09:09)

If you're really in the ego, you don't know it.

[Speaker 4] (4:09:12 - 4:09:30)

But how can that be so when what you teach us in A New Earth is that to be aware of it. And the more you're aware of it, you can say, because I've been able to see it. Oh, there's my ego.

There's my ego. There it is showing up again. I see it.

I see it. I see it. So there is an awareness.

[Speaker 1] (4:09:31 - 4:09:31)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:09:31 - 4:09:32)

Because mine's still alive.

[Speaker 1] (4:09:32 - 4:09:45)

But that's already, the shift is already happening. The awareness is there. You're not totally in the grip of it because the awareness arises also.

But there are many others who are still totally in the grip.

[Speaker 4] (4:09:45 - 4:09:51)

So if you're totally in the grip of it, you can't be aware that it has shown up. Finish this sentence. The world needs?

[Speaker 1] (4:09:52 - 4:09:53)

Spiritual awakening.

[Speaker 4] (4:09:54 - 4:09:57)

Awakening. I believe in?

[Speaker 1] (4:09:59 - 4:10:00)

Nothing in particular.

[Speaker 12] (4:10:07 - 4:10:13)

Oh, that cracks me up.

[Speaker 4] (4:10:14 - 4:10:22)

That is an LOLer. Okay. Love is.

Love is.

[Speaker 1] (4:10:23 - 4:10:32)

The recognition of yourself, the essence of yourself in the other. The recognition of the essence of who you are in the other.

[Speaker 4] (4:10:32 - 4:10:33)

In the other?

[Speaker 1] (4:10:33 - 4:10:39)

In the other. You recognize yourself in the other. As the other.

The oneness.

[Speaker 4] (4:10:39 - 4:10:41)

The oneness of all life.

[Speaker 1] (4:10:41 - 4:10:42)

The recognition of oneness.

[Speaker 4] (4:10:43 - 4:10:47)

Wow, that is love. That's a good definition. I'm grateful for?

[Speaker 1] (4:10:48 - 4:10:59)

I'm grateful for always this moment. The now. No matter what form it takes.

[Speaker 4] (4:10:59 - 4:11:04)

That's great. That is great. This was fun.

[Speaker 1] (4:11:04 - 4:11:04)

Yes.

[Speaker 4] (4:11:06 - 4:12:20)

Wow, I believe in nothing in particular. That's the first time anybody is like that. I believe in nothing in particular.

That's great. In today's breathing space, I can't think of a more joyful place to be than here at a dog beach along the shores of Lake Michigan. As Eckhart Tolle wrote in the book, *The Guardians of Being*, just watching an animal closely can take you out of your mind and bring you into the present moment.

Which is where the animal lives all the time. Surrendered to life. That's probably one of the reasons we love our dogs as much as we do.

See you next Sunday.

[Speaker 12] (4:12:38 - 4:12:39)

Welcome.

[Speaker 1] (4:12:42 - 4:45:01)

It's time again to talk about, experience another book. And what I've chosen for today could be called one of the greatest spiritual treasures of humanity. It has also been called India's greatest contribution to the world.

The name of the book, which I have here, well, I have four books here, but it's just different translations of the one book. The name of this book is, of course, some of you will know it. Some may know it quite well and others may never have heard of it.

The Bhagavad Gita, which means translated something like the song of God or the divine song. The book dates back to very ancient times. Nobody knows exactly how old it is.

Some people say it's 2000 years old. Others say it's pre-Buddhistic. Which would date it older than 2,500 years.

And others say, as it's claimed on the back cover of one of the translations that I have here, says that this book is 5,000 years old. That doesn't really matter. It certainly is ancient.

But we are not looking at it from an analytical or academic point of view. So whether it's 2,000 or 5,000 years old doesn't really matter because a book of this kind is timeless. It has survived thousands of years because it goes far beyond the culture out of which it came.

It transcends the particular culture out of which it arose in the same way that the Tao Te Ching transcends culture. The language the book was written in is, of course, the ancient sacred language of India. It's called Sanskrit.

The author is unknown. And the book is presented as a dialogue between disciple and Krishna. Krishna was a spiritual teacher or an incarnation of the divine.

Krishna, we know very little about Krishna or whether an actual person once lived long before the Buddha whose name was Krishna. It probably is the case that there was such a being. It is also likely, by the way, that his name, Krishna, is related to the originally Greek term Christos, Christ, Krishna, Christos, referring to an enlightened being.

But in this book, Krishna is the mouthpiece of, verbalizes the teaching. The disciple is Arjuna. His name is Arjuna.

And he asks Krishna questions. And Krishna gives a spiritual teaching, which is the book, the Bhagavad Gita. If you haven't read it yet, I suggest that you do.

There's a wide choice of translations, all different. This book is the Penguin Classic. Whether the cover is still the same as here, I don't know.

And when I opened it the other day, I saw that I put the date in here when I bought this book, 1977. Miraculously, it survived. I lost most of my books because I moved around so much.

But this one miraculously stayed with me. And this is when I first read it and immediately realized how profound it is. And I still have many things underlined in it.

The translation is by somebody called Juan Mascaro, a Spanish person, but he was bilingual in English, Spanish, and he also was a scholar of Sanskrit. A good poetic translation, I recommend it. Another good translation is Stephen Mitchell's translation, the Bhagavad Gita.

Again, somewhat different, also very good. The translation that we are going to use here, it wasn't easy to decide which translation to use here. But I decided on this very unusual translation by Jack Hawley, the Bhagavad Gita, A Walkthrough for Westerners, it's called.

Translated by Jack Hawley, published by New World Library, who, by the way, also published The Power of Now and Stillness Speaks. And this is a highly unusual translation. It is a free translation.

It is not particularly poetic. So some of that poetry that is there, of course, much more strongly in the original than in any translation, some of the poetry is lost. However, what is gained is greater accessibility, especially for Western readers.

And purists might frown upon this translation, but I believe it's the one that is the easiest at least to start with. Once you have absorbed the content, you can have a look at a more poetic translation. This translation successfully, from time to time, incorporates what one could call almost an interpretation, a brief interpretation into the text, but it's so well incorporated that you don't actually notice it.

So sometimes when certain terms are mentioned that are not explained in the original or in any of the other translations, the translator builds into the translation a very brief explanation of the term, not as a separate footnote, but as part of the text, and that most of the time works quite well. When you begin reading the Bhagavad Gita, you will, of course, you start with chapter one, and there you encounter the one, the greatest stumbling block, chapter one. Now I have to explain why that is a stumbling block.

Many people start reading it and give up before they reach the end of chapter one, but that's not necessary. Chapter one is not particularly important as far as the whole of the Bhagavad Gita is concerned. The reason why it's there, chapter one concerns Arjuna's question to Krishna whether Arjuna is a warrior, whether he should fight this impending battle or not.

Now before I explain that further, one thing needs to be mentioned. This scripture, this sacred scripture, the Bhagavad Gita, was at some point incorporated, put into a huge epic, the world's longest religious, to some extent, epic called the Mahabharata. It's a long epic.

It's about warfare between, one could say, the good side, the evil side, but all the people who are engaged in this, the kings and the princes, are related. So it's the Mahabharata is a huge epic about struggle between good and evil. It's not particularly spiritual.

It's interesting, but not particularly spiritual. And then suddenly in the middle of that, as they're about to fight a huge battle, there's Arjuna in his chariot and Krishna, the charioteer. And suddenly in the middle of this, just before the battle starts, on the huge army on the left, another huge army on the right, Krishna, Arjuna asks Krishna, I don't want to fight this battle.

And Krishna says, but you should fight because that's your duty. And so many people have questioned that advice and said, why is the incarnation of God telling Krishna to engage in warfare? And that's a legitimate question.

The answer, you can choose which answer most appeals to you, could be that it is used metaphorically, which means carry on doing what you are doing, engage with life and

don't withdraw from life, but engage with life. And you'll see that's part of the teaching is to engage with life, not to withdraw from action, but to be active. So it could also be seen metaphorically as the warfare against the false self.

The reason could also be that the first chapter provides a link between the rest of the epic and the Bhagavad Gita. The rest of the epic is about warfare. So that it doesn't look totally alien, the first chapter is a link between what happens in the epic and connects it to it.

It's a little bit like, let's say, give an analogy, you have soap operas. I hope Indian people are not offended if I compare the Mahabharata with a soap opera, but basically it's big egos fighting each other. So it's a soap opera.

Let's say you had a soap opera, like a long running, extremely long soap opera. In England, perhaps they have the longest running soap opera called Coronation Street on television. It's about a working class street where things happen all the time, dramas unfold, and so on.

And people meet in the pub every day. So imagine one of the, out of 500 episodes of Coronation Street, one episode suddenly starts like this. The people meet in the pub again, drinking their beer, and suddenly somebody walks in who is an incarnation of the divine and starts talking to the characters there who ask questions, say, well, what about our lives?

What do we do? And suddenly this character gives a spiritual teaching and that the entire episode of this Coronation Street is the spiritual teaching that is given in the pub there. And the next episode is the usual thing.

You carry on. So this, and of course, somehow you'd have to connect this with the rest of the episodes. So there would be an introductory remarks, perhaps by this person who walks in that connects it somehow to the rest of the episodes.

So here we have an analogy of how the Bhagavad Gita fits into the Mahabharata. And so the interesting thing happens then as this dialogue begins to unfold, the entire action, the army on the left, the army on the right gets frozen as if imagine suddenly everything, nothing moving anymore except the two characters in the middle, Arjuna and Krishna. So while the dialogue unfolds, the entire length of the book, the armies don't move.

Nothing moves. So everything gets frozen. So imagine visually huge army preparing for battle and suddenly everybody's, it's not mentioned as such, but that's how it is.

And while they talk, the armies just seem to disappear. They don't play a part in this anymore. So they're in the middle of the battlefield before the battle, but everything freezes.

And then the teaching is given. So the first chapter, you can just quickly read through knowing that it provides a link to the rest of this epic. And then it really starts with chapter two.

And occasionally even in chapter two, there's still occasional brief mentions of the battle, but mostly that's the actual beginning of the teaching. And most chapters, chapter two is no exception, already contain the entirety of the Bhagavad Gita. So the main themes occur again and again in every chapter.

So all we need to do today perhaps is look at chapter two, which already really contains the essence of it, especially one particular teaching. And perhaps we'll also look at one other segment in a later part of the Bhagavad Gita as before we finish our session today. And again, as is usually the case, when we talk about a book, it is ultimately not about the book.

It is ultimately about you. It's about consciousness. It's about spiritual awakening.

So it's a spiritual teaching seen through the eyes of this particular book. It's not something external to you ultimately. It's not an academic subject.

You can look at this as an academic subject too, but you can go to university and study it, but then it's no longer truly alive. And so Krishna begins to teach Arjuna about, begins already with a profound teaching about death and eternal life. And Krishna says, this is in chapter two, which I don't start from the very beginning, but a little bit into chapter two, there has never been a time when I, or you, or any of these kings and soldiers here did not exist.

And there will never be a time when we cease to exist. Physical bodies appear and disappear, but not the atma, which could be translated as the soul, the spirit, the life force, the formless. So physical bodies appear and disappear, but not the atma that lives within them.

This life force comes and dwells in a body for a while. While they're in, it experiences infancy, childhood, youth, and old age. And then upon death, passes eventually to a new body.

Changes such as death pertain to the body, not the atma. The wise person does not get caught up in the delusion that he or she is this body. This delusion is the very definition of ego.

So the importance, he points out the importance of not identifying with the physical form, because the physical form dissolves quickly. And if you've ever experienced, looked at a dead body, even a dead body of an animal, a pet, your dog, your cat, and even more so the dead body of a human being, then it's so obvious and so clear that that is just a shell, that that being never was the body. It's never more clear than in the

moment when the spirit has departed, the animating presence is no longer animating that physical form, after which very quickly, of course, it dissolves.

It's no longer, it's so clear, even beyond, you don't need to think about it, that that person never was the body. That this is just an empty shell that's left. And if you wait for long enough, you can see the empty shell dissolving very quickly.

Just a few days and it's unrecognizable. And so this doesn't require a lot of thought to see, to realize something that's so obvious. Because something that was there is no longer there animating this form.

And therefore, the true being was never that physical form. Now, you might have mistaken it, but now it's totally, if you didn't know it before, and once you realize that, then you can look at all the people in your life, whether they're close to you or anybody, but particularly, perhaps, people who are close to you and see that the essence of who they are is not their body, their physical body. And if you go a little deeper, then you see that the essence of who they are is not their physical body.

It's not their psychological form either. The psychological entity, the me entity. I have often spoken about that, so I won't go into that now.

But just here's the immediate realization then that to equate the body with who somebody is or to equate the body with who you are is an illusion. Arjuna, Krishna addresses Arjuna. Arjuna, he says, the contact of bodily senses with objects and attractions in the world creates feelings like sorrow or happiness and sensations like heat or cold.

But these are impermanent, transitory, coming and going like passing clouds. Just endure them patiently and bravely learn to be unaffected by them. So he's teaching to accept whatever sensory perception arises to accept it as it is.

And talks about sensations like heat and cold and other physical sensations arise and if you don't react to them you step out to some extent of identification with form because the more you react against something the more you get trapped in form, identification with form. It says here, contact of bodily senses with objects and attractions in the world creates feelings like sorrow or happiness and sensations like heat or cold. One could differentiate that a little bit more.

On the one hand you have sensations that arise as you go through life, pain sometimes, but happiness and sorrow arise not really immediately through sensations but through a mental interpretation of sensations. So you need to look of course how your mind interprets what's happening around you, how your mind interprets your sensory input and see that the happiness, the misery, it's a mental choice, it's a judgment of the mind rather than the immediate sensory perception. The serene person unaffected by these

worldly feelings and sensations is the same in pain and pleasure and does not allow him or herself to get disturbed or sidetracked.

This is the person fit for immortality. Realize this and assert your strengths, Arjuna. Do not identify your true self merely with your mortal body.

So it's through, it really comes down to accepting what is, whether it's a physical thing or a situation, accepting what is rather than reacting. Now an interesting sentence here, if you do not get disturbed by the external things that happen, then you are the person, as it says here, fit for immortality. That's an interesting thing to say because on the one hand, they just said that the essence of every human being is immortal.

And then here they say, it's when you not identify with external forms and sensory perceptions, but allow them to be, then you are fit for immortality. So one would need to add here what Krishna is talking about is conscious immortality, to be conscious of your own immortality, which is very different from unconscious immortality. When you are not conscious of your immortality, there's great fear of death.

So conscious immortality is realizing within yourself the essence of who you are beyond the form. That is conscious immortality. And you can only realize the essence of who you are beyond the form if you don't react continuously to the forms that arise around you as sensory perceptions.

Situations, people, they all become sensory perceptions. If you live in reactivity, I want to have that, I must introduce you, then of course you're trapped more and more in form, especially psychological form. So allowing things to be, not being dependent on externals is part of the spiritual practice, is part of realizing yourself as formless consciousness.

So this is the teaching of detachment. Without detachment, you can talk about spiritual things for a hundred years and talk about God in every other sentence, and it makes no difference. There's nothing spiritual in anything you say or believe in.

Without detachment, the spiritual dimension is not open, hasn't opened up. And Krishna continues, real as used in spirituality means that which is eternal, never changing, indestructible. This is a very definition of reality.

That which is real in spiritual language, spiritual terms, that which is real never ceases to be. Anything that is impermanent, even if it lasts a very long time and seems durable, eventually changes and thus does not have true reality. The wise ones understand the difference between the real and the not real.

When you fully understand this profound fact, you will have attained the zenith or pinnacle of all knowledge. This needs to be qualified a little bit. He says, when you fully understand this profound fact, which is the difference between real and unreal, now this

translation here may not be the ideal one because it's not, this gives the impression that there's intellectual understanding required for you to realize the real.

So when he says, when you fully understand this profound fact, it really means when you fully realize this profound fact, understanding would be an intellectual work, analytical work. And just, oh, now I get it. The real doesn't change and the unreal is whatever changes.

I'm beginning to understand now. No, that's not it. So it's not understanding as such, it's realizing.

So I would suggest a different translation here. When you fully realize this profound fact, you will have attained the pinnacle of all knowledge. And how do you realize that?

Well, that's what it's all about, to realize that in you that's not subject to change. Well, where is that? Well, you could approach it very simply.

What is it that never changes in your life? One could ask.

[Speaker 12] (4:45:04 - 4:45:06)

Well, I don't know.

[Speaker 1] (4:45:07 - 7:17:36)

Well, if you look closely, you see one thing never changes. Your life is always now. It's always the present moment.

It has never not been the present moment, undoubtedly. No, could it ever not be the present moment? So your life is always the present moment.

Not what happens in the present moment that changes, but it's always the space of the present moment. That space, that there's content in it, but in itself it is just space for the content, that is unchanging. And that is consciousness, not the content of consciousness.

The space of consciousness. And so if you become acutely aware of the present moment as the very foundation of your life, or the very essence really of who you are, you are the present moment in which everything arises and then disappears again. Forms come and go.

What he talks about, the impermanence of all forms. Therefore, the forms are not ultimately real. Only that which is beyond form is real.

So what arises in the present moment is not ultimately real, but that which gives rise to it is real. It's consciousness itself. One's body, then Krishna says, is not real.

Not in those terms. And yet there is something that dwells within the body that is real.

And it is called here the atma, which is existence itself, says this translation.

I would suggest another translation here, which is being itself. Because it's not existence, because existence is something that stands out, that has form. X means out, Latin.

Sistens, standing. So he's not talking about existence. He's talking that which underlies existence, which is being.

But then he suggests two other terms for it. Awareness or pure consciousness, which is correct. So I'll read one more time this little part.

One's body, then, is not real. And yet there is something that dwells within the body that is real. The atma, which is being, I've changed the translation, which is being itself.

Awareness, pure consciousness. The wonderful thing, just a brief mention, when you are in touch with the truth within yourself, the truth of being, of who you are, and you read a spiritual text or the translation of a text or something handed down over centuries, you can immediately see what's wrong or what's right. I can see what's wrong or right in this translation without knowing Sanskrit.

Because immediately you see it, oh, that's the wrong translation. Don't even need to look up what the original is because the truth is realized within. And whether or not it's accurately shown when you see a text, you know it immediately.

I'll just, again, I'm jumping ahead now just to illustrate what I just said. In the same, still chapter two where we are, just a little bit further, it says this, just an illustration of what I just said to you. A reservoir that is necessary for a person during a dry spell is of little use during a flood.

Similarly to the enlightened person, even scriptures are superfluous. Yes, live amicably with worldly existence, but know you must transcend it. Prepare yourself for nothing less than union with divinity itself.

The important part here that I, why I read it is a reservoir of water that is necessary during a dry spell is of little use during a flood. So to the enlightened person, the scriptures are superfluous. You don't need books and scriptures anymore, but you may enjoy them.

And if something is not correct in them, also the mistranslation or because it's been misquoted, trans had been like some of the sayings of Jesus. You can, when I first saw the New Testament after my shift in consciousness and read it, I could see the truth of it. And I also saw occasionally that can't be right.

That's not how it is. So how the person, the evangelist or whoever wrote it had misinterpreted the original teaching. So that's a wonderful thing.

You recognize the truth when you see it. And when it's not quite right, you immediately know it. So he talks about the reality of who you are beyond the physical form.

And the next sentence here is, get to know this reality. It pervades the entire cosmos and is unchanging and indestructible. No power can affect it.

No one can change the changeless. And I like that translation, get to know this reality, which is better than understand because you can't understand it. It pervades the entire cosmos and is unchanging and indestructible.

This Atma is like space or sky. Clouds appear in the sky, but their presence does not cause the sky to grow apart to make room for them. In the same manner, the Atma, the true self within, remains ever itself.

Things of the material universe come and go, appear and disappear, but the Atma never changes. So I often, of course, use space also as one of the most appropriate words to point to that formless essence of all life. It is like space.

What we experience as space, and you can't even experience space, but somehow it's there. The Atma, the real us, was never born, nor will it ever die. This eternal reality within is never destroyed.

When your ego takes over and you erroneously identify yourself with the body, you feel that physical death is death to the self, and that is frightening. But the self, the Atma, can never be killed. When the body is slain, the Atma remains unaffected.

As a person sheds a worn-out garment, the dweller within the body casts aside its time-worn human frame and dons a new one. The cessation of your present pain and sorrow will depend on how well you overcome your ignorance of your true self that lives within you. So the only way of being free of suffering, of sorrow, is to overcome the ignorance of your true self that lives within you.

And then it continues to talk more and more again. We're still in the same chapter of the nature of the self. It's in some way repetitious, but that is how the reading of it, or the listening to it, can in itself become a transformational process if you listen in a state of openness and receptivity.

So I'll read just another two little paragraphs. He says, nothing new now that hasn't already been said, but in slightly different words, repeats the same, to drive it home, to drive it into you, where the truth can be recognized, not by the ego, but by the underlying intelligence. It is not easy to fathom this mysterious concept of the true self.

Everything else in the world changes. Every creature, rock, blade of grass, human being, element or component of any kind changes. Only the atma never changes.

Because it is never modified, it is termed immutable. Because it is invisible, has no form and cannot be heard, smelled or touched, it is termed unmanifested. Because the human mind cannot perceive or conceive it, it is said to be unknowable.

Unknowable means you cannot understand it. Ah yes, he actually says that. No one really understands the atma.

One person sees it as wondrous, another speaks of its glory, another say it's, others say it is strange. And there are many who listen but do not comprehend it at all. Very few even think of inquiring into what is beyond this physical world.

Humans who are not ready yet for this realization have no interest in even asking the question. They continue to be identified with form, believing that that is all there is and all they want and all they need. And as they continue to be identified with form, gradually their suffering grows.

Increases more and more until finally something in them cracks open. A little crack appears in their otherwise impenetrable form identity and then they begin to be open to the deeper message. Open to, they begin to, they can then suddenly hear the truth of this and then want to know more, go more deeply into it.

And we'll skip a few paragraphs now. In the next sentence here, there's a brief reference again to the battle but already it's used metaphorically. Rather than the real battle, heed this important point about life in general.

The way to win this great war is to react alike to both pain and pleasure, profit and loss, victory and defeat. You may remember I wrote in the A New Earth about the Zen master who, when accused of having done something, falsely accused, all he ever said is, is that so? He immediately accepted.

He reacted alike to pain and pleasure, victory and defeat. Just completely at one with the is-ness, as I sometimes call it, of the present moment. That's what it is.

So the way to this realization is the inner alignment, the inner oneness with what is now. And the spiritual practice is, as I sometimes put it, saying yes to whatever arises in this moment. So pain or pleasure, it is what it is at this moment.

Profit or loss is what it is. Victory or defeat is what it is. But it also implies, it's not that you become devastated when there is a defeat, you lose your job, but also means when there is a victory or gain, you don't become ecstatic.

You say, oh, that's nice. Well, okay. You don't go, well, yeah, I got it.

Yeah, yeah. Because you're creating a high and before you know it, the thing that created that high is taken away from you or dissolves or loses its ability to make you feel

that. And then you, oh, no.

So the continuous dependency on external factors. So the good and the bad is accepted as it is. But you can only do that when you are rooted in the stillness of being and know that as the source of all satisfaction.

Then the defeat does not remove that and the victory doesn't really add anything to that. It's just what happens in the world of form. Things come and go.

Things are given and taken away. And now we come still in the same chapter to what some people, including Mahatma Gandhi, who read the Bhagavad Gita throughout his life, whenever he needed inspiration, he would go back to it. And according to him, what comes now and other interpreters and teachers is the central, the most important teaching of the Bhagavad Gita.

So Krishna continues to speak. You have now heard an intellectual explanation of the principle of atma, the true self, and of the need to discriminate between the real, the unchanging, and the not real, anything that changes. Now pay attention while I explain a practical spiritual discipline called karma yoga for living a more effective, happier life in this vexing, ever-changing world.

This is the path of selfless, God-dedicated action. By making this your path, you can live a spiritual life and yet stay fully active in the world. You can remain a man of action, achieving your very best, and yet not be bound or caught by the worldly.

So the term is karma yoga. Of this spiritual practice, yoga, don't think of yoga as the physical yoga that's only a small aspect of the larger yoga. Yoga means union.

So it's union with God. Karma yoga, karma, the literal meaning of the word karma is action. So when we usually talk about karma, we talk about action and reaction, and reaction, reaction, but the meaning of karma is action.

So karma yoga means union with God, the universal spirit, consciousness, through action. This was a revolutionary teaching, and for many people it still is. Traditionally in India, many other places too, the only way people thought you could achieve spiritual awakening was to withdraw from the world and become a hermit, become a monk, to renounce, to become a renunciate, renounce all worldly goods, renounce involvement in the things of this world.

That was traditionally what was regarded as the only way to spiritual awakening. And here in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna teaches that yes, renunciation is one of the possible paths to spiritual awakening, but it is not the one for most humans. And he teaches that there is another path that does not involve turning away from involvement in worldly things.

Now he explains further what karma yoga is. When one's actions are not based on desire for personal reward, one can more easily steady the mind and direct it towards the atma, the true self within. For the person of steady mind, there's always just one decision.

Your attention is on being, on consciousness. But for the quivering mind pulled in a thousand directions, the decisions that plague it are endless and they exhaust one's mental strength. Further explanation of what karma yoga is, work hard in the world, but for work's sake only.

That's the translation here. Now that I've scribbled here, I looked it up, how this person, Mascaro translates the same sentence and it's quite beautiful. And this sentence is the essence of karma yoga, that spiritual practice.

Set thy heart upon thy work, but never on its reward. And there we have the essence of the whole thing. And that becomes a spiritual practice.

Now what does it mean exactly? Set thy heart upon thy work. Give whatever, and work does not just mean the work that you do for a living.

Work means any action that you perform. Set thy heart upon thy work means give whatever action you perform in this moment your fullest attention. Do it fully, be fully in it.

But never, don't set your heart on its reward. Setting your heart on its reward means where's your attention? Most people who don't live like this, they don't practice karma yoga.

When they perform an action, whether it's the work they do for a living or any action that they perform from the most insignificant things to wiping a table clean or making a cup of tea or putting on your shoes. These are all actions. But for most people, they set their heart, to use the terminology used here, upon the reward of the action.

Now the reward of the action comes, of course, is not now. It's a future thing. You're focusing on some desired outcome.

So in other words, large part of your attention is not in what you're doing. A large part of your attention is on the future moment that you want to get to through this particular doing. And when I say large part of your attention is on the future moment that you want to get to, what I'm really saying is that a large part of your attention is in your mind, in your thoughts, rather than in the doing.

Because the future that you want to get to is no more than thought forms. There is no actual future anywhere, ever. So when you are focused mentally on the reward in the terminology of the Gita, you're really trapped in thought patterns of future.

Those thoughts of future reward, outcome, where I want to get to, what I want to achieve through this, takes attention away from the doing itself. And the doing becomes inferior in your mind to the desired outcome. And so the energy that flows into the doing is karmic energy in terminology of this.

It creates further suffering. And you're already, you're not connected to the deeper intelligence within you when you are focused on the reward of the, sometimes it's called also the fruit of your action in some translations. So when you are focused on the action itself, then the ego is no longer operating through you.

The egoic self, the false self, is no longer performing the action. But you connect with a deeper level within yourself when you are fully giving your fullest attention to what you are doing. Egoic action is always a means to an end.

This is why the ego also, every human being the ego meets becomes somehow a means to an end. You're never, the ego cannot fully appreciate the presence or the being of another human being. It cannot honor another human being.

It cannot love another human being. It unconsciously can only use another human being for some egoic purpose. It doesn't know that.

It might even think it's in love with another human being, not knowing that what they call in love is the ego wanting to have this human being in your life because it adds something to who you think you are or it fills a feeling of lack inside you temporarily. And then this other human being is there to make you feel complete. You make me feel complete, but it doesn't work for very long, of course, because that incompleteness is always part of the egoic consciousness.

So this is a vital practice of not, as I sometimes put it, not making this moment, whatever you're doing in this moment, not making that into a means to an end. That's basically the same teaching as the Gita in slightly different words. Don't do anything as primarily, yes, it may also be a means to an end, of course, if you put on your shoes or you put on your pants.

Of course, you know that the end is you want to have the shoes on your feet or you want to have the pants on your body. But while you're putting them on, you can give your fullest attention and appreciation to that movement also. So yes, on the periphery of your consciousness, there is an end that you want to achieve, but the focal point of your attention is on the doing.

That's the reversal of normal consciousness or unconsciousness, where on the periphery, you're aware of what you're doing in the present moment, but your main attention is where you want to get to with that action, the fruit of the action. And that keeps you trapped in the bondage and in ego and in identification with form, in future, in thought.

Set thy heart upon thy work, but never on its reward.

You have every right to work, but you should not crave the fruits of it. Although no one may deny you the outcomes of your efforts, you can, through determination, refuse to be attached to or affected by the results, whether favorable or unfavorable. Desire for the fruits of one's actions brings worry about possible failure.

This is the quivering mind I mentioned. When you are preoccupied with end results, you pull yourself from the present into an imagined, usually fearful future. Then your anxiety robs your energy and making matters worse, you may lapse into inaction and laziness.

So you either get stressed, in continuous stress, or you can't stand it anymore and then you can't do anything anymore. And now a very important statement follows. One does not accomplish great ends in some by and by future.

Only in the present can you hammer out real achievement. The worried mind tends to veer from the only real goal, realizing the Atma, uniting with divinity, the true self within. So you cannot accomplish great ends in some future moment.

Only the present, only in the present, can you hammer out, as he translates, real achievement. So all true achievement is in the present moment, and that determines the quality of your life, as I call it. How present you are in what you do immediately brings quality into what you do.

It's hard to define what I mean by quality if you cannot feel it. There's a, do something totally as a means to an end or observe somebody performing some action, only concerned about the outcome. And you can see what I mean by low quality action.

You'll be doing, going, I want to get, I need to get there to this, not paying attention to really to anything because you have some thought of future outcome. And you get upset at the slightest obstacle that comes into you. Of course, obstacles arise all the time, of course, in one's life.

I want to get there, but then something stops me. And immediately when an obstacle comes in, somebody even questions something. They don't, you get either angry or fearful.

It shouldn't be happening. Whereas if you're aligned with the doing, then when an obstacle comes, immediately it's accepted and you look, you give it attention. And then you see, you immediately adjust to the newly arisen situation and take action.

You don't complain, oh, about somebody or some situation that has arisen. There's no huffing and puffing, as I sometimes call it. Because many humans go through life, huffing and puffing about this, complaining about this, shouldn't be this.

All that drops away because they're huffing, puffing because they have some idea of what they want in some future moment. It's never going to come anyway. So as an obstacle arises, immediately you look at it.

And then intelligent action arises. Because you're aligned with the present moment, you become much more intelligent. Not knowledgeable, necessarily, but intelligent.

Because you connect with a deeper level within yourself. And then what you say and do is more intelligent when you are aligned with what is, instead of trying to get it out of the way. That's the only way you can truly become intelligent.

That is the, that's why there's a book by Krishnamurti called *The Awakening of Intelligence*. Because that's what it is. The true intelligence is not really awakened at universities.

There you acquire knowledge or you develop your ability to analyze. But it's not yet true intelligence. The ideal, then, Krishna says, is to be intensely active and at the same time have no selfish motives, no thoughts of personal gain or loss.

Duty uncontaminated by desire leads to inner peacefulness and increased effectiveness. This is the secret art of living a life of real achievement. So real achievement is always in the present moment.

How are you dealing with this moment? How are you performing whatever action you are performing at this moment? What is the underlying state of consciousness with which the action is being performed?

That is achievement, to be at one with the doing rather than some future idea. And that is success, true success. True success is a successful present moment.

And a successful present moment is being one with the present moment. And Krishna goes on to say, work performed with anxiety about results is far inferior to work done in a state of calmness. So he's saying something similar to what I just said about quality.

When he says it's far inferior, work performed with anxiety is far inferior to work done in a state of calmness. There's an incredible difference between something done in a state of oneness with what is and something done with some projected goal that I need to get to. Equanimity, the serene mental state free from likes and dislikes, attractions and repulsions is truly the ideal attitude in which to live your life.

To be in this state of mind is to be lodged in the divine. Pitiful are those pulled by the fruits of their action. And Krishna goes on to say that the living in this way gradually eliminates karma from your life.

When you're endowed with this basic detachment, you shed the karmic consequences of

both your good and bad deeds, casting aside the inevitable effects of your actions. Never lose sight of the overriding goal, which is to free yourself from bondage during this lifetime, to shed attachment to worldly things, detach from ego and truly release yourself from the wheel of birth and death. When you do this, you actually become one with God.

And Krishna says to Arjuna, I see that you sigh at this breathtaking goal, Arjuna. Know that you can achieve this by first uniting your heart with God and only then pursuing worldly things. Proceed in this order, not in the reverse order, and then your actions will be linked to the very purpose of life, which is again union with the divine.

By first uniting your heart with God, I would put it somewhat differently. First, you need to be rooted in being, which means honoring the present moment, which means being aware of the stillness within you. Being aware that you are aware, being conscious that you're conscious, being conscious of consciousness, that space in you, so that you touch the source of all satisfaction.

And then you act. And then you don't lose yourself in the action. It's a continuous vigilance is required in this practice so that you don't lose yourself in the action.

And then that always means you become stressed or angry or upset or nervous. And there's always something more important that you need to get to and you're lost out there. The knowledge of the true self, which is called atmic wisdom, atmic comes from atma, this is the true self within, is not for all.

Those with agitated, uncontrolled minds cannot even guess that the atma is present here within. So not everybody is able yet to hear the truth of this or even to be interested in this, and that's fine. It just means they have to suffer a little bit more first.

Here's a brief description of how people lose themselves in unconsciousness. Brooding on or merely thinking about worldly attractions develops attachments to them, getting drawn into thought. From attachments to sense objects come selfish desires.

Thwarted desires cause anger to erupt. From anger arises delusion. This causes confusion of the mind and makes one forget the lessons of experience.

Forgotten lessons of experience cloud the reason which results in loss of discrimination between truth and non-truth, real and not real. Finally, losing the faculty of discrimination makes one veer from life's only purpose, achieving union with the divinity within. And so one's life itself is wasted.

One lifetime is wasted, but ultimately nothing is wasted. I'd like to add it's all part of the awakening of consciousness. So what a beautiful teaching.

And we've only looked at one chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. And we've seen the essence

of it, union with the one, as it's called, or the divinity within, realizing who you are beyond form and the spiritual practice of karma yoga, which one translator also translates as consecrated action. That's also a beautiful translation of karma yoga, action that is like a consecration of its, this almost like a religious, like a sacramental act, even the most seemingly the most insignificant action that you do.

But let's see. So no matter really where you are in life or what actions you perform, you start wherever you are right now. You don't need to wait for conditions to get better for your spiritual practice or that you can withdraw from the world.

The revolutionary teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, it was revolutionary then, it still is in a way, that everyday life can be used as a spiritual practice. And no matter what form it takes and whatever form it takes for you is the most appropriate one for you at this moment. You have to see that and then start practicing.

And when you no longer resist the present moment, you may also be surprised how quickly certain situations change when the habitual resistance isn't there anymore. How often things change for the better. They're actually kept in place, situations that are difficult are often kept in place by the very resistance.

The unhappiness that arises through that resistance creates further unhappy experiences. And then you end up interpreting everything that happens through your unhappiness. And many humans live like that.

So let's be grateful that such a lovely teaching exists. As I said, this is perhaps the one to start with. If you want to read the Bhagavad Gita, there's so much in there that I would like to spend at least one other session soon going more deeply into some of the other chapters of the Bhagavad Gita.

Here I have a little Bhagavad Gita that I bought many years ago, also survived miraculously, published in India by the Theosophical Society, which has the Sanskrit and the English together. Not that probably you won't understand the Sanskrit, but it's just lovely to look at the writing. I believe the writing is called Devanagari, which means the writing of the gods.

This is a somewhat more literal translation, which you can look at later after you've read the more accessible translation. And I'd like to end from the literal translation of the end of chapter two. So all the chapters end in the following way.

Thus in the glorious Upanishads of the Bhagavad Gita, the science of the eternal, the scripture of yoga, the dialogue between Shri Krishna and Arjuna, the second discourse ended. Welcome. Today, we're going to look at a book again, not an entirely new book.

It's the second, our second session on the ancient Indian scripture called Bhagavad Gita, which translated means the song of God or the divine song. I'll just, as a way of

introduction, I'll just for a few minutes talk about the background, Bhagavad Gita. I talked already in more detail at the beginning of the first session on the Bhagavad Gita, which many of you will have already seen.

So the Bhagavad Gita, nobody knows when exactly it was written and nobody knows who wrote it. But it is beyond any doubt, one of the most profound spiritual writings, teachings in existence. Some people say or believe it was written 2000 years ago and some go back as far as 3000 years.

So nobody really knows. And of course, the language it was written in is the ancient language of India, Sanskrit. There are many translations of the Bhagavad Gita.

And if you become interested in it, I recommend that you look at least at two or three different translations. Each translation may have some merit. No translation can be absolutely perfect.

If you really want to get to the bottom of it, you'll have to learn Sanskrit, which will take you 10 years or so, and then you can pick it up. But as an alternative to that, I recommend that you go within and find the source of consciousness within yourself, in which case you don't need to learn Sanskrit for 10 years. Because all any scripture can do is point you back to the source within yourself.

It's a map, not more than that. So some maps are very helpful, but no map is the territory. So don't become a collector of maps.

You can appreciate the maps, but the important thing is the destination, going there yourself. And the translation I will mostly use today is the same, of course, I used in our first session on the Bhagavad Gita. It is a free translation.

This is it, Bhagavad Gita. It's called A Walkthrough for Westerners. And this, I believe, is the most accessible translation.

It's unusual. The purist probably would frown upon it. It's a free translation.

It even incorporates a little bit of interpretation in a very subtle way. It incorporates some interpretation into the translation, which is very helpful for Westerners. Other translations that are very good are the Penguin Classic.

This is, I bought this one in 1977. It has the date in. This is a good translation.

Stephen Mitchell also did a good translation, and various others. So what we'll do today, I'll just select a few passages, brief passages, read them to you, and then comment on them. Now, let's start with a very interesting little passage.

As you may, everybody nowadays is familiar with the scientific theory of the Big Bang, that the universe started an inconceivable time ago out of nothingness, seemingly. The

scientists, of course, have no idea. They don't even question what was there before the entire universe came into existence.

But they believe that it all started with a primordial kind of explosion. And what was there before then, nobody can even talk about it, because if there was no universe before the Big Bang, the entire question was, how long did it take for the universe before the universe was born? All that is totally meaningless.

You cannot ask that, because there is no time without the universe. But it is interesting that a scripture written 2,000 or 3,000 years ago already talks about basically this very event and puts it into a larger perspective. So I'll read this to you now, and then we can briefly talk about it.

When Brahma, the creator, that means God, basically, when Brahma, the creator, wakes up at the dawn of each cosmic day, this entire universe and all creatures in it are instantly manifested, only to be dissolved back into the unmanifested, formless at Brahma's cosmic nightfall. So the Bhagavad Gita says that the universe comes into existence when God, of course, it's a kind of analogy, it's not the absolute truth, which could not be expressed in words, but it could be a distant glimpse of the truth. God wakes up, and as God, the primordial one consciousness that underlies all of existence, as God wakes up, the universe begins to come into existence.

And it's called the day of Brahma, the day of God. But there's not only one day, there are many days when the same thing happens again and again. Let's listen to this.

But each cosmic day and night of Brahma lasts thousands of yugas, which are time periods, eons, and each yuga lasts 10,000 to 400,000 years. So it consists of countless periods, each period lasts 10,000 to 400,000 years. The time is all but incomprehensible to humans in succeeding days and nights of Brahma, the same multitude of beings helplessly comes to birth and death again and again as the physical universe continues its expanding and contracting.

So again and again, according to this, it happens that the universe, as God awakens, the universe comes into existence out of the unmanifested and out of nothing seemingly. And then the nightfall comes when the universe returns back into the nothingness out of which it came, the unmanifested. And that, according to this, that is the night of Brahma of God when God goes to sleep.

And here they compare it with human beings, this eternal cosmic play is the same in the microcosm of the individual soul as it is in the cosmos. When an individual goes to sleep, the entire world his or her mind experiences as real withdraws only to come alive again at waking. So there's the general dictum as above, so below.

So everything that is true for the macrocosm must also apply to the microcosm and vice

versa. So if we look at certain things within ourselves, we can draw certain conclusions as to the nature of the universe. And this is, of course, something that scientists have neglected so far.

They only look at the outside world to find out how the universe works. But one can also look within into oneself and you can find out things there that you can then apply to the macrocosm. For example, one was mentioned here, you wake up in the morning and then at night you disappear into, especially in dreamless sleep, you disappear into nothingness.

In dreamless sleep, there's absolutely nothing. You kind of, you go back to the source, but you don't know it. Then you wake up again.

Isn't it strange that the entire population of the planet at a certain time, they all suddenly become unconscious as the planet revolves. Well, we are so used to it, we don't even question it, the fact that people go to sleep every night. It's so normal, nobody ever questions it.

But let's say you come from some other planet where things are not like that, although there must be similar things happening everywhere. It's strange that the entire population suddenly drops unconscious. Once every 24 hours, they all go, and then they wake up again.

It's called sleep. And then we also have the heart. The heart expands and contracts as it works, the human heart, it goes.

So you have the same expansion and contraction as it's here described, the expansion and even scientists are talking about it. The expansion of the universe and on a vast, inconceivable scale, the universe, an inconceivable spatial scale, an inconceivable time scale, the entire universe goes, this is the God awakens and becomes the universe, and then it goes just like the human heart. The entire universe goes.

And similarly, the in-breaths and the out-breaths, you could say that the in-breath of the universe is the coming back to the source. That's again, you can observe yourself, you breathe in and out all the time. These are the cycles, the heartbeat, the in-breaths and the out-breaths, waking up, going to sleep.

You breathe in and you breathe out. And so as above, so below, the entire universe in some way, we could say operates in the same way, the out-breath of God and the in-breath of God. Those are the cycles.

Now, when the universe awakens, which would be the big bang, it does not mean there's one slight word here that I would disagree with in this translation, where it says when the creator wakes up at the dawn of each cosmic day, this entire universe and all creatures in it are instantly manifested. I wouldn't say they're instantly manifested, they are

gradually manifested. And in some sense, we could say, which it would not be right to say that the universe is completely awake already.

The universe is in the process of awakening. It didn't awaken with the big bang, that was the big bang, it was just like the human going like this in the morning after a good night's sleep, the eyes open a bit and you are just still fairly unconscious. And then gradually more consciousness comes in.

And now the universe is awakening. We are you sitting there, me sitting here, this book, this scripture are beyond what it seems to be on the surface, the universe awakening. One of billions, countless ways in which the universe is awakening.

So we are part of an intrinsic part of the awakening universe and human awakening. Now, I don't mean now the awakening from sleep for humans, but spiritual awakening, human awakening is an intrinsic part of the awakening of the universe. So we are in the midst of the awakening of God, you could say, into this world.

And as God awakens and this one consciousness, which is the light of God, God animates countless life forms, the flower, that the life within the flower, that which animates the flower or the life within your body or the life within your mind, the one underlying consciousness creates forms through which it expresses itself, one could say. And the forms become more complex. It all started with very simple life forms and now become more complex.

Humans are much more complex than microbes or bacteria or even fishes in the sea. So gradually, this is an adventure. So we are not in the universe that's already awake.

We are part and essential part of the awakening of the universe. You are the universe that's awakening. And of course, according to this, there's that cycle of going back.

Why and so on, we can't even go there. Even what we talk about is not the absolute truth. Perhaps it is a distant approximation of what it is like.

No human mind could possibly understand how the universe operates and the vastness of it would be absurd to even try it. But this is just a distant glimpse of what it's like, a very limited way of understanding it. But now we come to a more important part even, Bhagavad Gita continues.

But beyond even the mysterious unmanifested state into which all beings dissolve at cosmic nightfall, there is another unmanifested reality. It is Brahman, the Godhead, the thing in itself that is beyond time, that does not perish even when existence itself dissolves. It is this eternal, absolute thing in itself that is the ultimate goal.

I am that, Arjuna. I am is Krishna talking, which is the personification of the divine. I am that, Arjuna.

Arjuna is the person Krishna is talking to in this dialogue, that is the Bhagavad Gita. All those who come to this ultimate home come to me, that's the ultimate reality speaking, God, never again to be separate, never again to return. So beyond the world of manifestation that we perceive and experience as the universe, there is the unmanifested one life out of which, of course, the entire universe arose.

But this unmanifested one life did not disappear when the universe came into existence, it continues. It is, I would say, it is present within each life form, within you, within me, as God. There is something in you that is one with the source of all life.

The core of who you are is the unmanifested one that was already there when the universe came into existence and never remains at the core of each life form, untouched by time. And human existence and what the true awakening is, is the universe becoming aware of itself as that unmanifested, and that is the spiritual awakening. So as you, the human being, awaken spiritually, you realize that you are not the form that you took yourself to be, that you took to be your absolute reality, the body, the psychological form, the mind, but you realize, you sense something within you.

It's not something, but we have to use language. There's something within you that has nothing to do with the physical body or the thoughts that go through your mind. There's a spaciousness there in between two thoughts, for example, now.

You don't disappear when you're not thinking, when one thought comes to an end and the other one hasn't come yet. There's just a little space there. In that space, there's nothing.

And yet that space in which there's nothing, there is a very subtle presence, but it has no form. It's consciousness itself. And that's the, if it's not the unmanifested, one could say it is the emanation of the unmanifested to use almost poetic language.

So you can sense something within you, an aliveness that has nothing to do with you as a person, but without which the person could not be. There's something formless in you that underlies your personal existence, but is usually overlooked. So to become aware of that, which I sometimes call stillness, that really is the goal of spirituality to know yourself as that.

Now let's look at another little passage here. Now Krishna, the personification of God here explains a little bit more about human life, human existence. It says, I will now explain more about the individual soul, which is called jiva in Sanskrit.

I'm now using for one or two sentences, which I scribbled in here, this translation, which I thought was slightly more, slightly better in this case. A spark of my eternal spirit becomes in this world a living soul, and it draws around its center, the five senses and the mind. So this is again, the divine God, the one consciousness talking.

A spark of my eternal spirit becomes in this world, a living soul, and it draws around its center, the five senses and the mind. A body comes into existence. The atma, which is a part of divinity, atma, a part of this God within, enters into a body in the womb before birth.

Thus, it enters the world of matter. And in this translation, it says, it draws around itself the five senses with the mind as the sixth sense. Now comes a very poetic way of looking what happens.

Like a breeze wafting the scent of perfume, the atma, when it migrates from one body to the next, carries with it the mind and the senses. So the atma is the consciousness, and it carries with it this scent of fragrance of previous existence. That means it brings along the intellect, the ego, the sense of being a separate identity and the lower mind, thought, mind, transferring thoughts and tendencies from previous lifetimes.

The individual soul, because it has drawn the senses around itself, experiences the pleasures, desires, and pains of the world. Now, important part comes now. Now, people who are unaware of the true self within, the underlying atma, the underlying timeless consciousness, do not recognize this soul in them that is using the senses.

As the senses are limited to the mind level, they are incapable of comprehending atma, which is above the mind. The yogi, however, the yogi is the person engaged in spiritual practice or spiritual living. The yogis, however, possessing the eye of wisdom, the yogis, however, possessing the eye of wisdom, do see me, their atmic self within.

The eye of wisdom. The translator here put in brackets intuitive faculty. Now, this is according to the Bhagavad Gita, the faculty of becoming aware within oneself of that which is deeper than the person, it calls the eye of wisdom.

And the translator to explain a little bit, as I said, put in brackets the intuitive faculty. And really, this is what my teaching, it's not my teaching, is all about is of course, becoming aware of yourself as consciousness. So that there is the dimension, the timeless dimension suddenly is realized within you.

And you do it at any moment by becoming aware that you are aware. Like right now, can you become aware at this moment that there is a presence there, that you are awake, that there is an underlying presence, even when you're not thinking, without which you couldn't exist. There's an underlying aliveness, a presence, whatever you want to call it.

You don't have to think to know that. In fact, it's only when there is a gap between two thoughts, you become aware that you haven't disappeared, or that you don't remember your personal history. You don't even, at this moment, you don't even remember your name, you don't need it.

But there is an essential aliveness or presence there. And that is the eye of wisdom that

suddenly arises. Knowing yourself as that, you could also say what's left of you when you stop thinking.

Now you can't think about that. The usual tendency when I ask a question like that, that seems difficult to comprehend is you start thinking about it. So when I ask what's left when you stop thinking, then you might say, oh, I have to think about that.

But that's never the answer. So there is that which has assumed form in you, which is the person with its history, and there is that which is timeless and formless that underlies it all, that is actually the essence of your sense of identity, atman, and that is self-realization. It says here, to obtain this eye of wisdom, you must do two things, surrender your ego and purify your mind.

And that is done, I would say, by realizing that you are not your mind. Because if you're identified with every thought that comes into your head, as many humans still are, then basically you are your mind, and beyond the thoughts that go through your head, there is nothing else, that's all you know. And the thoughts that go through your head are conditioned by your upbringing, by your past, by your environment, the country you live in, the time period you live in, your family background, all those things determine what kind of thoughts go through your head.

And all those thoughts that go through your head habitually make up who you consider yourself to be. That's a certain story arises in the mind, and that becomes the mind-made self. And that is the reality for most humans.

And it's also a fact that for most humans, that is a very limited reality. They don't realize how limited their worldview is, how limited all their opinions are. They don't realize that they're inhabiting these little presence in their minds, that's their reality.

And when you're totally trapped in your mind, then you create a lot of conflict because then you, all the other minds become like enemies to you. And then you can become an extremist, whether political or religious, or you just have a lot of conflict in your personal life. You're just totally stuck in your little, in your head.

Cannot recognize your connectedness with nature, your connectedness with other human beings. You're cut off by concepts, by thoughts. And so that's most people's reality.

And spiritual awakening is realizing that there is a dimension in you that is far deeper than that. And that here, according to the ancient teachings, it's Atma, which is the God within, the divine within, whatever you want to call it. And that's a liberation.

That's even just having glimpses of that is liberating, that there's more to you than the little person that before was running your life. And with that, an intelligence comes into your life that is greater than the intelligence of your conditioned mind. And that's what

all spiritual teachings are about.

I'd like to read now a poetic passage where the timeless one consciousness talks about itself. And we really have to look at this as a kind of poem rather than philosophy or anything like that. It's quite inspiring.

I am pure consciousness, the underlying essence of all elements and beings. Nothing whatsoever exists separate from my divinity. There's no power in the cosmos that does not emanate from me and belong to me.

The entire universe is suspended from me as if I wear the string in a necklace of jewels. The gems may differ vastly, but the force holding them all together, the central thread is me, divinity. I am the innate nature of everything.

In pure water, I am the sweet taste. In the sun and moon, I am the radiance. In the very center of human beings, I live as virility and courage.

I am the sacred word om, which designates the divine, and I am the sound of it heard throughout the universe. I am the slight delicate scent, the sweet fragrance of the earth. I am the brilliance in both fire and sun.

I am the light of divinity in all beings. I am the subtle spirit in spiritual practices that gives them their existence. I am the love in the devotee, the austerity in the ascetic, or the sweet sense of charity in the giver.

I am the primordial seed of all entities, the power of discrimination in those who are intelligent, the splendor within all resplendent beings and things. Of the strong, I am their might and vigor. As I am beyond all attachments, I am the power in unselfish desire.

I am the subtle force in good actions that puts them in harmony with the welfare of humanity. I am the innate urge to help others. So this is a beautiful poem.

And as you listen to something like that, or if you go back and get the book and read it, it's essential and it really works for you when you not just read it or listen to it with your mind, but you can actually sense something. For example, as this talks about the I am, I am, I am this, and that if you can feel, if you can sense the inherent I am that you are, then it's not just an external scripture anymore. Then the external scripture has become a pointer that actually works.

It points you back to your very source. And then you can go around and you can look at all the life forms in this world and sensing your inherent oneness with them. You see, you look at the flower suddenly.

Of course, there's that one consciousness has given birth to this life form. It's real. That,

and so, and you can sense an aliveness within you as you look at that, an aliveness that has nothing to do with who you are as a person.

There is an aware presence there, which is especially noticeable if you don't label the flower mentally. Just look at it. Don't have to call it anything.

A nice, what a lovely flower. You don't need it. Well, if that thought arises, it's fine, but then you can drop it and just, and look.

And what's there when you look at a flower? There's the looking, there's the color, there's the shape, there's the scent or fragrance, perhaps. You can even touch it.

And what else is there when you look at a flower and you're not calling it anything? You're just looking and smelling, perhaps. Is there anything else there then at that moment?

Yes, there is the presence that makes the looking and the perception of the flower possible. There is the consciousness, the light of consciousness in which this perception arises. That is the, in you, the divine, the unmanifested, recognizing itself in the manifested, and seeing that the essence of the flower, sensing that the essence of the flower is one with your own essence.

And then you feel a connectedness that wasn't there before when you had ideas about the flower. When you were talking about the flower, thinking about it or learning facts about it, that may have its place. But if that takes up all your attention, then you live in a very limited world.

So beyond thinking about things and talking about it and labeling it and judging it, make sure there is another dimension in you, present and consciously present, where you can sense that there's a presence in you that makes all this possible. Would there even be a flower if you were not perceiving that flower? If there was no perceiving entity here, what would there be, what we call flower here?

Well, a physicist would, of course, say, well, it's a conglomeration of atoms and molecules. They're dancing around for a while until they separate and go their separate ways. It's not a flower.

There's a dance of atoms and molecules, but somehow the flower is born with the act of perception. And the act of perception is only possible because there's a consciousness there underlying it. And you are that consciousness beyond your personal history on a much more fundamental level.

You are the consciousness of the universe. That's what the entire Bhagavad Gita is really about. When you realize that, you don't need any scriptures anymore, but you might still enjoy them.

Often people make scriptures into gods. They just, oh, this is it. So you externalize again.

Of course, it's only a map or a pointer or signpost. You are the consciousness of the universe, and you can sense that. There's something deeper in you than the person, not separate from it.

The person has come out of it. One could almost say, let's say, you are the ocean and the person is the ripple on the surface of the ocean that appears there very briefly. Tick, tock, tick, tock.

Now, the ripple that only knows itself as the ripple, or a little wave, let's say, if you're a big guy, a VIP, you're a wave. If you're a normal person, you're a ripple. But a wave or ripple, they don't survive for that long.

No wave or ripple survives for that long, and then it's gone. If the ripple on the surface of the water, let's say, that has a certain amount of consciousness, if it only knows itself as a ripple, that's a very limited view of itself because really it is the ocean expressing itself temporarily as the ripple. So if the ripple could realize that it's the ocean in addition to being a temporary ripple, that would add an enormous dimension to its life that it was ignorant of before.

It's true. I mean, if you're just a ripple surrounded by all these other ripples threatening, it's, oh, scary. So you are that.

Another analogy we could use, a ray of sunlight. You could say that you are a ray of sunlight, and the ray of sunlight forgot where it came from and where it continues to come from and what it is connected to and ultimately what it is one with because the sunlight that comes from the sun is not separate from the sun. It really is an extension of the sun.

So when you feel the sunlight on your skin, it's an extension of the sun. If this ray of sunlight couldn't feel anymore its connectedness to the sun, then again, existence would become very limited. So the ray of sunlight needs to suddenly go within and say, oh, I can now feel that I'm connected to this vast thing and I'm just a temporary expression of this vastness.

And suddenly you have a trust in life because you are the vastness and an enormous trust comes in. What is trust? Which in some religious traditions is called faith, but I would prefer to use the word trust because that's really what faith is.

But not trust in some abstract idea, but trust in something that you are being carried. You're one with something vast and you are essentially it. And what is trust?

It's the end of fear. Until you feel the depth of you, that there's more to you than you thought there was, there must be fear. You can't really have trust in life if you cannot

feel the life, the true life within you.

So fear goes as you become still and as you become present and you realize the most essential thing about you is consciousness, you're conscious, the light of consciousness. And very much a secondary thing is the person that's the ripple. So there are two ways of looking at a flower.

You can look at a flower as a person and through the eyes of a person in which case you say, what a nice flower. I'd like to give that to my mom on Mother's Day. I will order it tomorrow, whenever it is.

Or, oh, why don't you, I'd like to cut those flowers and take them home or put them, they would look good on my living room table or whatever else. Or you say, oh, this is called such and such in Latin. I know its name and all kinds of things about it.

That's one way, that's fine. That's one way of looking at the flower. Then you look at the flower as a person and for flower, you can take anything else, another human being, anything.

And another way of looking at the flower is to just look and be alert and present as you look without any label and sense the alertness in the background of the looking. Ah, then suddenly there's a depth there. And then more and more you function in this dance between being a person, looking through the eyes of the person, but never, not anymore completely losing yourself as being in this personal sense of self.

Yes, still occasionally applying it. It still occasionally operates in you. It has its place.

Labeling things has its place. Sometimes you need it, but not again losing yourself in all the thoughts that come this, that. Always having access to the spaciousness that's deeper than the person.

Then you become, the life becomes quite wondrous. You look around, but in a fresh, new way. It's always fresh and new.

And the world is then alive again. The more you get trapped in concepts, the less alive the universe is because then the concepts are old. I've seen it all and done it all.

Then they don't look anymore. And of course, then you know it all. It's even worse.

Opinions, trapped in opinions. Now, here's an interesting little paragraph on the Bhagavad Gita. What kind of people become spiritual seekers?

And it divides into, there are four types of persons, according to here. And this still applies very much nowadays. And this was two or 3,000 years ago.

There are four different types of persons who seek spirituality or God. He saw Krishna

talks again as the personification of the one. Four types of people seek a connection with me.

One, the world weary. People who worship God for the alleviation of physical or mental agony or to be released from fears and adversity. There's many people, of course, who come to a spiritual teacher or teaching or a spiritual book, come for that reason.

And it is a good reason to be, want to be free of suffering. And of course, the whole Buddha's teaching is about freedom from suffering. So that's one type.

Two, the other seekers of happiness. They are seeking happiness through worldly things. People who pray to God to obtain wealth, family, power, prestige, and so forth.

So they get, they, maybe those are people also who do go into manifest, manifesting things through positive thinking and affirmations. But come out connecting with a somewhat deeper level, yes. In a limited way still, yes.

So they're seeking spirituality because they want something in this world. It still applies. Not that much has changed apparently.

And then there are the seekers of, this number three now, the third group, are the seekers of spiritual advancement. People whose motive for connecting within divinity is to gain knowledge and experience to aid their self-realization. And I would add people also who want to have the high of what they conceive of as the high that surely enlightenment must be.

As I sometimes call it, they want the fireworks, they're waiting for some ultimate experience. So that's another group. I have many like that.

And of course, I'll talk about that in a minute. Number four, these are relatively rare, according to the Bhagavad Gita, are people who want to know God, who truly want to know the atma, the self, who know that God alone exists and whose only impulse is for the divine and nothing else. And those are relatively rare.

I just want God. So the ones numbers whose motive for connecting with divinity is to gain knowledge and experience to aid their self-realization. So we have wanting to be free of suffering, wanting to be happy through this, that, or the other.

Three, wanting knowledge or experience or some high. And four, the direct wanting the one. I just want that.

So it's, of course, Bhagavad Gita says, of these four, the last is the highest because they know my truth and are devoted to me. As I'm supremely dear to them, they are very dear to me. The first three are attached to the worldly objects or mental states they desire.

But certainly all four types are noble because any reason for turning Godward or inwards will in due time lead to spiritual transformation and is therefore ultimately good. So my comment on this is the, it is true that the ones who just want God are rare and that's fine, it's not needed. Wanting to be free of suffering is more helpful.

Those who want to be free of suffering or adversity who've had enough suffering, that is a very powerful motivation for seeking spiritual awakening. It's a more powerful motivation and more likely to lead to realization or awakening than those who are seeking either happiness because they will have to experience that none of the things they seek, even when they get them, is really going to fulfill that purpose of making them happy and fulfilled. And then they begin to suffer.

And so they join group one. So first you're in that group for quite a while and then when you realize, okay, my manifestation is great, it works, but still it's not quite right because nothing fulfills me. Then you go back to group one, you're suffering.

And if you're seeking, now many spiritual seekers seek some kind of enlightenment experience or awakening. And sometimes I get, they write in and say, I've been trying so hard for so many years and it's not happening yet. I want to be free.

I want to be enlightened or whatever they call it. And they are expecting some kind of experience or they believe that if they acquire enough knowledge about it, finally it's going to work. And so they become very knowledgeable.

They can quote all kinds of scriptures. It's all there. And they know more and more about it and more and more.

And for those people, it's quite hard. In fact, unless they join another group, they're not going to make it. But they will have to join another group, which again is group number one, suffering.

Because if you try and try and try to get enlightened and then you get so frustrated, it's just not happening. So you join the suffering group and then you're much more likely to find it. So I'm really very fond of group one, suffering.

As long as you are not identified with yourself as the suffering entity, when that becomes your identity, then you have another problem. But nothing that cannot be addressed and recognized in yourself. Now, the most important teaching in the Bhagavad Gita that runs through, that it's mentioned in almost every chapter is what's called karma yoga, which is a way in which you perform action in this world.

I already briefly talked about it in our first session, but since this is perhaps the central theme and it's the main spiritual practice, one could say recommended in the Bhagavad Gita is to do whatever you do in a certain way. And what that is, I'll explain again briefly. And if you do whatever life gives you to do in a certain way, that will lead to a deepening

and spiritual realization.

And that can be really, you can summarize that as in the words of the Bhagavad Gita, do not be attached to the fruit of your action. Which of course simply means, don't look to the goal of what you want to achieve through whatever you're doing now. Give your complete attention to the doing rather than where you want to get to through the doing.

And that's again, a very important lesson nowadays because most humans don't know that yet. They are always one moment ahead. They want to get there.

You may find in your own life still a lot of the time, you are not present moment centered. You are focused on the next moment that you need to get to. So whatever you are doing at this moment is designed to get you to the next moment.

And internally, you project yourself away from what you're doing now because the doing becomes a means to an end. This is very normal. Everybody lives like that.

Whatever they do is a means to an end. And in their mind, the end is more important than what they're doing. That is so habitual and unconscious that most humans don't even know that that is how they live.

That they always live for the next moment but they're never completely in this moment. They also don't know that by living in that way, they create frustration and suffering and stress and discontent. And basically, they're condemning themselves to continuous discontent and to stress because if you ignore the present moment continuously and ignore means, you make it into a means to an end because the next one is so important that you need to get to, then you miss life completely.

You miss the depths that potentially is there in life and life becomes shallow because it's all mental, because the next moment is always a mind formation. The next moment is a mental projection. The next moment is never a reality because it doesn't exist.

When the next moment comes, okay, one minute from now, I've got one minute to finish this. And then after one minute, it's not one minute, it's always now again. And then there's the next thing to do, of course.

Immediately, you look to the next thing because you have become used to being uncomfortable with the present moment, conditioned since childhood to feel ill at ease in the present moment. Oh, I should be doing something and doing implies some future projection. You can never be, you're always doing.

And now the Bhagavad Gita by recommending as a spiritual practice to renounce, as it's called here, to renounce the fruit of your action. Sometimes that is called a sacrifice. And what is really in this ancient terminology, what is to put this into modern terminology is really designed telling you to pay attention to what you are doing in this moment and

make this moment the primary focus of your life, whatever you're doing in this moment.

And the secondary focus is what you want to achieve through whatever you're doing. So, and that is called a sacrifice. One could say you sacrifice the future if you renounce the fruit.

It says if you renounce the fruit, a different energy flows into what you do. And then many helpful factors come in. And that is the truth.

And it's a new way of living where you actually, whatever you're doing now, you give it your complete attention. This is more important than what I want to achieve through it. Yes, I know what I want to achieve through it.

But since there's only ever the present moment and nothing else, surely this must be important than the projected future moment. And then you can give your fullest attention to the doing and not to the desired outcome. And also then you are not dependent for your sense of fulfillment on the way things turn out.

Because if you're dependent for your sense of fulfillment on the way things turn out, quite often you will become frustrated because they may not turn out the way you want them to turn out. And especially, and the more dependent you become on the way things are going to turn out, the more likely it is that they're not going to turn out the way you want them to turn out because there's fear in you. And when you need things to be in a certain way, there's already fear in you.

So the fear flows into what you do and contaminates what you're doing now. The quality of your doing is contaminated by fear. And so the very thing that you were dependent on is less likely to happen because the quality of your doing diminishes.

In other words, you are less conscious in the way in which you act. And the less consciousness flows into the way in which you act, the less likely it is that the outcome is going to be productive and satisfying. So the more you depend on a satisfying outcome internally for your wellbeing and sense of identity or sense of worthiness or whatever it may be, the more you depend on the desired outcome, the more likely it is that you're not going to get it.

It'll fail in some way. And that makes life very frustrating. But if your sense of fulfillment is derived from the doing itself, that is that the outcome is secondary.

You no longer need it to make you feel fulfilled. The fulfilling thing is what you're doing now, the attention behind it, the consciousness behind the doing. If you can feel the consciousness flowing through you as you do something with your hands or as you speak or whatever it is you do, relate to other humans.

If you feel that and you enjoy the doing of this moment, in any, let's say you have a

business negotiation, the outcome is you want the contract to be signed. And if your focus is excessively on wanting the contract to be signed for the company you work for or whatever, then the quality of your interaction with the other humans, the humans that you need to sign the contract, diminishes. The other human, the other person will intuitively feel your unease.

You are uneasy because you're fearful about the outcome. So will also intuitively feel that you are not truly relating to him or her as a human being. You are making him or her a means to an end unconsciously because you want them to sign the contract.

Now these, the people that you're dealing with, they don't know these things consciously that I just mentioned, but they can feel that and they will feel, no, I don't think I want to sign the contract with this person. It doesn't feel quite right. Whatever, or something will come in, they'll verbalize it in some way.

No, it doesn't feel right. Or they see, bring up some obstacle and magnify it and say, no, no, I can't do that. And then you have the alternative, somebody who doesn't need the outcome, but who gives his or her complete attention to the other person and actually enjoys the negotiation, the talking, enjoys not just what is, not just the words that are being spoken, but enjoys the presence of the other human being there behind the words.

But you can only enjoy the presence of the other human being if you can enjoy your own presence beyond the mental constructs in touch with yourself. So there comes a sense of goodness and rightness in the present moment of being with this other human. So you acknowledge their being.

You're not using them as a means to an end. Primarily, yes, it would still be nice if they signed the contract, you know that, but that is not your primary focus anymore. And if they don't sign it, you're not suddenly turning hostile.

As in many, in the business world, often you find if the people, if you don't do what they want you to do, they become hostile or they walk away, immediately lose interest in you. You haven't signed the deal. And that's quite normal.

The people who are most effective and successful actually are people who perhaps without even knowing it, perhaps because they have good karma, as the Bhagavad Gita would say, they live in this way. They like every moment of it, of interacting with you if you are the client. They love interacting.

They love that present moment. They don't transform the present moment into some means to a future end. And this teaching about renouncing the fruit of your action is the primary teaching of the Bhagavad Gita, which is 2,000 or 3,000 years old.

And still, most humans haven't learned that lesson. But that's all. If you have no other spiritual practice, then this would be quite enough.

And that is making the present moment the primary focus of your life. And not a means to an end. Then if that becomes your practice, you will not make another human being into a means to an end.

Because the only place where you can experience another human being is in this present moment. If you make the present moment habitually into a means to an end, you make this human being that you're encountering in the present moment into a means to an end. And then the quality of your interaction deteriorates, and you won't be loved.

The ego wants to be loved. But since you are not loving, the love can only come when you don't make the other human into a means to an end. Then there is a loving kindness there that flows through you.

Then there is benevolence there, the goodwill is there that is all missing when the present moment is a means to an end. And then all the things that the ego said it wanted, I want to be loved, and I want people to think I'm great. Well, as long as the ego operates in its old usual way, and the ego always operates in its old usual way, you won't get it, the very thing that you needed.

And then as you shift to, I can only be, instead of believing, I can only be happy if the world and other people recognize me and tell me that I'm important. And so you'll be trying to use people in order to get there. When there's a shift, you renounce the fruit of your action.

You begin to enjoy whatever you're doing in the present moment. And then suddenly, suddenly the things that you thought you needed, recognition, people liking you, people recommending you to others, people seeking you out, wanting to come to you, the ego always wanted that. And suddenly you have it when you don't really need it anymore, because the present moment is already fine.

It's good. You're enjoying it. At least if you can't enjoy it, you're surrendered to what is at this moment.

So there is a spaciousness there. And then all the things you thought you needed, as Jesus said, will be added onto you. You get the icing on the cake when you don't need it anymore.

Well, that's the irony. You'll get the things when you don't need them anymore. And you will still enjoy the things, but they won't make you happy because nothing external can make you happy for very long.

The happiness is something deeper that arises out of dwelling fully in the present moment. Then you feel alive and happy. I don't actually use the word happiness that much because it sounds a little bit too superficial, but the true, the true, the joyfulness of being alive, that inner spaciousness.

So that is karma yoga, which means the practice of action. Karma really means action. And yoga in a wider sense is spiritual practice.

And so the Bhagavad Gita here's comments says about this, action normally ties the human being to the wheel of birth and death, but not when performed as an act of sacrifice. So the act of sacrifice means you renounce the fruit of the action. And the terminology of the Bhagavad Gita, you offer up the action to divinity or to God.

That means you're completely present in the doing as if you were offering, whatever you do at this moment is an offering to the universe. And that's a, it's a giving. You actually enjoy the giving.

So that's the offering of this. It's not really a sacrifice anymore because it's quite enjoyable. Sacrifice we think can't be enjoyable.

You give. Then it says here, the action is non-binding. Sacrifice in this spiritual meaning of the word, the translator has added in a very subtle way, a little bit of explanation to the text.

Sacrifice in this spiritual meaning of the word is a universal rule, a fundamental law of nature. Sacrifice as the spirit of giving, which permeates all of creation. This sacrifice is a way for mankind to convert earthly misery into happiness.

So the giving is, you can look at the sun, how the sun pours out energy for millions of years continuously. And that is, according to the Biography of Eden, that is the principle behind the universe is the giving, the outpouring of energy. And that is what you enjoy rather than what you want to achieve through it.

That's a secondary thing. And when you live in such a way, everything changes. When you engage in selfless service, that is really selfless action because when you look to the fruit of the action, you really want something to enhance your sense of self through it.

And so surrendered action is also selfless action. When you engage in selfless service, which is sacrifice, your desires are fulfilled unasked by nature. Righteous people give more than they receive.

Indebted ones get more than they give. The one who receives without giving is stealing. So it's essential to, it's a spirit of giving, giving of yourself, giving of your energy, which is inherently enjoyable.

The eternal is present consciously in every act of service. Work performed with the best of motives becomes sacrifice. Life itself is turned into a sacrifice when directed to the service of divinity.

When people perform service as sacrifice, no matter what their work or profession, the

universe itself becomes elevated and sublime. So you transform the universe itself by performing action that is selfless. And important sentence that I just read, the eternal is present consciously in every act of service.

So when you work or act in that way, what does it mean the eternal is present? It means something flows into what you do that comes from a deeper level within yourself than the personal identity consciousness. So as you are present in what you do, the doing becomes imbued with consciousness.

So there's more than, let's take a simple example. I can wipe this table. Let's say there's some spots on this table and I take a cloth to wipe a table.

I can wipe it wanting the fruit of the action, which is just want to get this done. And what I really want is the clean table. I'm not particularly enjoying the wiping of the table because I want a clean table.

And you can feel when you do that, certain energy frequency flows into what you do. And it can be very extreme, it can be even angry. Oh, this is dirty again.

At least I want it clean or in a very subtle way, just in any case, what you want is the fruit of the action. You're not enjoying the movement or the energy that flows into the movement or the sounds that the cloth makes on the surface or the sound that comes out of the cloth. Scent of spray that you use to clean the table.

You don't enjoy all that. That's a means to an end. Or you can actually go, and it smells quite good and you can feel the cloth and you can enjoy the movement of it.

You do the same thing, maybe slightly more slowly, maybe not even that. And it's the same thing. And if you are, you can feel it.

It feels different the way, to it in that way. It feels different because the energy that flows into it is of a different kind or of a different frequency. And it says in the Bhagavad Gita that the work performed like this, the eternal is present in every act of service like that.

So consciousness itself moves through you beyond the personal sense of self. Consciousness flows into what you do. Presence, as I sometimes call it, flows into what you do and it becomes a lovely thing.

And of course, yes, at the end, the table is clean. When you started, the table was not clean. But you are not more fulfilled or happy at the end than you were during the action.

In fact, the end is only insignificant compared to the doing because you're always doing something. So that's just a tiny example. Just you can take another example, going from

here to there.

Again, is it just a means to an end? Or driving from here to there, driving to the store to buy something. Is that trip, let's say it's 10 minutes, is that something that you would rather not be engaged in?

You would rather be at the store already, in which case your mind is somewhere else. It's already where it wants to be or some total, I just need to get there. And then you run into the store and then you're looking for what you need.

Where is it? Oh, it's there. Okay, and then you run back to the cash.

Okay, but there's a line up. Oh, what are they? Why are they so slow?

Oh God, I need to be back home. And then finally you get to, you pay for it. Then you go back to the car and another 10 minutes driving back home.

Then you got into the kitchen and the wife is there. Oh, come on, let's get, we're running late. Get on with that.

We need to get this done by, okay. Always, always trying to get somewhere, but never quite getting there. And then your whole life like that.

It wasn't just an episode of half an hour. It's basically your whole life like that. No, that's not a pleasant way to live.

And how could it be? It could be that you actually enjoy the drive to the store because that's the present moment. Why can't you enjoy the drive to the store and look and enjoy even when you're stopping at the traffic light, it glows red.

Well, it's alive. It's a deep red color. That too is a form of life produced by humans, but it's an energy there.

An energy feed can even, you can look at the sky for a while. You can look at the trees. You can enjoy the movement of the car and the people that walk around.

There's all movement of life everywhere and you're breathing and it's fine and you do the same thing, but you're in it fully. It's beautiful. You can enjoy even going from one aisle to another and looking for it, and you don't even have to slow down to enjoy what you're doing.

Sometimes you may want to slow down, it's fine, but at other times when you actually need to go somewhere, be somewhere, you can enjoy or even doing something fast as in Zen saying, you might know the Zen saying, hurry slowly. That's what they tell you, hurry slowly. What does that mean?

How can I hurry slowly? That means if you have to hurry, keep the slowness inside you where you're totally present. Then you actually feel a centeredness even while you're running and actually enjoy the running.

Why can't you enjoy running to get back home or whatever? It all comes back to present moment. That's all there is.

You achieve what you want to achieve, but you will be assisted by the power behind all creation. That's a, don't believe me, you have to start living this way and find out for yourself whether this is true or not, whether you are assisted by the power behind all creation when you begin to live in such a way, present moment centered, then things actually turn out better. Not always absolutely perfect, doesn't mean nothing will ever go wrong again, so to speak.

No, but even the going wrong is all part of the isness of this moment. So that's the spiritual practice of karma yoga in the Bhagavad Gita. And so humans have for two or 3000 years been reading these things and a few managed to do it, but most don't know yet that there is another way to live.

And that's what it is. There is another way. Now you have nothing to lose by trying it out.

If it doesn't work, do it for months. If it doesn't work, you go back to your old way. But how could it not work?

How could enjoying what you do in the present moment, how could one even say it doesn't work? So this is the walkthrough for Westerners. This is the Penguin Classic.

I don't know whether it still has the same picture on it. Let me just finish by reading just a few from this translation, which is slightly different in character. The visible forms of my nature are eight.

This is an ancient division. Earth, water, fire, air, ether, the mind, reason, and the sense of I, which is a mental self. So these are the physical forms of my nature.

My nature means divinity is speaking. The visible forms of my nature are eight. Everything here is made up of these elements, it says, which is also in the West, I had a similar view.

Earth, water, fire, air, ether. And then comes the non-material, the mind, the intelligence, the mental sense of self. But beyond my visible nature is my invisible spirit.

This is the fountain of life whereby this universe has its being. All things have their life in this life. And I am their beginning and end.

So beyond my visible nature, all the things you can see, the things that you can think, your sense of your mental sense of self, the egoic sense of self, beyond my visible

nature is my invisible spirit. This is a fountain of life whereby this universe has its being, the fountain of life, the invisible spirit, which you can realize within. It's not a thought, it's not an emotion, it's not a sense perception.

Then what is it? It's that which makes all thoughts and emotions and sense perceptions possible. Oh, consciousness, the light of consciousness, feeling it, sensing it as yourself.

Just one or two more lines to finish. Again, what I've just been talking about, let's see how the Bhagavad Gita puts it. Set thy heart upon thy work, but never on its reward.

Work not for reward, but never cease to do thy work. Do thy work in the peace of yoga and free from selfish desires. Be not moved in success or in failure.

Yoga is evenness of mind, a peace that is ever the same. Work done for reward is much lower than work done in the yoga of wisdom. And it says, be not moved in success or failure.

Well, that comes, rather than telling somebody not to be moved in success or failure, I would tell them how to be in that state of consciousness where you are not moved by success or failure and that of course is presence. Then if the outcome is good, oh, it's appreciated. If the outcome is so-called not what you wanted, well, that's how it is.

And you move on. It's still the present moment. And that means your success or failure don't make that much difference.

And the success does not give you the incredible high that it gives you when you desperately needed it. Oh, wow, yeah, I got it, yeah, yeah. You'll quickly come down from that.

And often you find the very success that you attained has a downside to it when you experience that. So it's the appreciation of what you wanted comes. It's lovely, it's great, but it doesn't change your state of being or consciousness anymore.

Good, that's it for now. So I wish you happy practice in present moment living or as the Gita calls it, karma yoga. Karma yoga, the practice of action or action as a spiritual practice.

[Speaker 10] (7:17:58 - 7:18:52)

Thank you, Eckhart, for sharing the presence once again. My question is somewhat related to that last one, but from a different perspective. As the consciousness rises around us, there are many more resources and many new technologies to ease the suffering of humankind around the world.

But the white elephant in the room that no one seems to want to acknowledge in that process is the fact that the population is increasing faster and faster, it seems. I guess

you can phrase that question so the answer is included, but I'd like to hear your perspective on what we might do to facilitate that process or how that process will take care of itself.

[Speaker 1] (7:18:53 - 7:18:59)

Can you be clear what is the process you refer to?

[Speaker 10] (7:19:00 - 7:19:13)

How the strain on the planet's resources as a result of the population increasing ever faster, how we'll be able to resolve that conflict.

[Speaker 1] (7:19:14 - 7:24:19)

Well, it's obvious that the population cannot go on increasing because that would lead to disastrous consequences. Ultimately, that's fine too because the one consciousness will manifest through any form it chooses again and again and is evolving. But it is quite possible that the larger intelligence that is, that underlies the planet, the planet, there is an intelligence that pervades the planet itself.

The planet is an intelligent being which mainstream science would, of course, not agree with. But I very strongly feel that and anybody who becomes sensitive enough and no longer totally absorbed in conceptual thinking can sense that the entire planet is an intelligent being. It has a regulating intelligence and I feel that if humans don't take action to reduce this proliferation of bodies, they continuously produce, if humans don't take positive action, then the regulating intelligence of the planet, planetary intelligence, with just one another expression of the one universal intelligence, will take action and will do something to reduce the number of human beings on the planet. This is my feeling. I cannot prove to you that this is a correct prediction or agnostication, but the intelligence will take action and whether the action it takes is a violent form of action or whether the action it takes is non-violent, I don't know.

For planetary intelligence, it would be very easy to reduce humans within one generation by reducing the fertility in the sperm of men so that very far fewer babies are produced. And within one or two generations, the population could be reduced by 50% if many men are not able to father children anymore simply because something is missing there. That would be problemless.

So if I, I'm not in charge of planetary intelligence, but if I were, that's what I would do. It's totally painless. Don't have to kill anybody.

So, but we shouldn't wait for that. We need to look and see if we first, of course, we need to discover the wisdom inside. If we only approach it from the analytical mind, we'll just create, we tackle one problem here and we'll create a series of more problems on top of

that.

So we need to become, go within, find the wisdom that is in the stillness, go within, and then the question is whether those people who are able to do that are those people that take decisions. Probably not because the politicians are not there yet. Well, most of them, but we are making a start here.

So first, so that you can take intelligent action, go within, never act from fear or kind of panic. We need to save the planet. Oh my God.

This is you generate fear. If you generate fear, nothing good can come out of that. Even if your intentions are good, any action that is taken on the basis of fear is going to have negative consequences and secondary effects.

So first we become still and peaceful and realize the truth of the beginning of the course in miracles, which says, nothing real can be threatened. Nothing unreal exists. Herein lies the peace of God.

[Speaker 12] (7:24:23 - 7:24:23)

Okay.

[Speaker 1] (7:24:24 - 7:25:28)

Now, what action can we take? If you are not in a powerful position, at least perhaps you can come up with ideas that come from out of the stillness. I don't have a series of actions that mankind should take because this teaching doesn't work in that way.

This teaching is designed to take the individual human being deep enough within so that they can connect with a source of who they are and everything else other people will have to do. So I can't give, tell you what course of action to take because the focus of this teaching isn't in outer action, but it goes to the source of all intelligence and all wisdom. But I have a feeling that you have some ideas already.

Is that right?

[Speaker 10] (7:25:29 - 7:25:31)

A small contribution, perhaps.

[Speaker 1] (7:25:31 - 8:11:28)

Yes. So, and that's a good start. And see where that takes you because you are able to access the stillness and fruitful, creative ideas come out of that.

So all I can say to you to carry on with what you're doing and see what else comes to you and in what other ways you can be helpful and useful so that planetary intelligence

does not have to intervene. Welcome. I'm speaking to you from British Columbia, Canada.

It's about just after one o'clock in the afternoon on a beautiful spring day. The purpose of our meditation, of course, is always getting in touch with that which transcends the person to discover that there's more to you than the person. Person meaning both the physical body and your mind plus emotions and so on.

So all your thinking is to do with the person, emotions, your history, successes, failures, so-called. And even if you've reached a very high point in your life right now, you've just succeeded at something, just gained something, just fallen in love, you will find that it won't be long until that is no longer a real source of satisfaction for you. And it may even turn into its opposite.

High becomes low. Now, that's not a negative way, a gloomy, pessimistic way of looking at things. And it's not saying that you should not appreciate when good things happen to you or you achieve things.

It's wonderful. And it's to be enjoyed. So you can enjoy it knowing that, of course, it's not going to last forever.

And it cannot be a source of continuous satisfaction forever. If you were suddenly transplanted to the most beautiful place, let's say you're not happy where you are living now, maybe the climate isn't good enough or the environment isn't good enough. There's nothing wrong with striving towards finding a better place.

But even if you were suddenly transplanted to the most beautiful location you could imagine, perhaps for some people, that would be an island where it's always warm and pleasant. And there's the blue sea and there's white sand or whatever else you could imagine to be the ideal place. And suddenly you're there and you have nothing to worry about.

All your needs are met. And of course you might say, well, then I could really get into the spiritual stuff because we're living in a world where we wouldn't have to worry about all these other things anymore, making a living or succeeding or helping my family members or whatever. So it's all ideal suddenly and you would be happy for a while.

And then gradually you would become dissatisfied. First, boredom sets in. And after a while, your energy level would go down too because in the absence of challenges, you would, the degree of alertness would diminish.

So as far as your spiritual life is concerned, the best place is where you are right now and discover the dimension, the transcendent dimension here and now. And use whatever problems or difficulties you have as an encouragement or an incentive to go deeper into yourself, not running away from problems. Of course, you still may have to take action if

action is possible or necessary or desirable.

You can take action to change situations, to improve situations in your life. But at the same time, see if you can discover the deeper dimension within that has nothing to do with what goes on in your external life. And that's why we're here, to discover that.

This is not about managing your external life better. There's nothing wrong with that, but you can, there are other teachings that can help you with that if you still need them. But it's discovering a deeper dimension within.

And that also has a by-product of discovering that is actually that it improves your external life immeasurably because you're no longer dependent on the ups and downs, the gains and losses, the good days and the bad days of your external life. You're not dependent on those things anymore for your sense of well-being or fulfillment or inner peace. And isn't that an incredible thing when you can enjoy things, deal with things?

Yes, but you're no longer dependent on the ups and downs. So all of you already have some access to that dimension within, and we're just here to deepen it. Or if you're completely new to this, this may be an occasion when you have your first glimpse of that in you that, which transcends your person, the personal life, the personal dimension.

So just like the universe, and the universe is whatever is around you, or the room you're sitting in, or if you look at the stars at night, or look out of the window, there's the universe with lots of things in it. And it's easily overlooked that the most essential thing is not the things, but the space in between things, even the room that you're sitting in. There's stuff in it, furniture, there's a floor, a ceiling, walls, but the essence of every room is the space.

The space in the room. So there are two dimensions, form, furniture, walls, ceilings, floor, ceiling, floor, and space, formlessness. Or you look up into the sky at night, what you see, countless stars, most of which are suns, just like our sun, many of them much bigger, countless stars, and the vastness of space.

Well, you can't actually see the vastness of space, you cannot see space, that's the strange thing. You can never say, oh, here is space. Because space is not something, everything else is something.

And now the amazing thing is there's an equivalent in you of what we call outer space, space, we could call it inner space. And that's the essence of who you are, just as the space in this room is the essence of this room or the space that allows billions of stars and galaxies to exist out there is the essence. And yet you can never pinpoint it or examine it under a microscope.

So the essence of you, you also cannot pinpoint, scientists can examine your brain, but they won't find you there. We know almost nothing about the brain. Of course, there's a

connection between the brain and consciousness.

But the brain is a kind of transmitter of consciousness or receiver, it does not actually generate consciousness. Most scientists haven't discovered that yet. They claim to know what the brain is all about.

We don't even know what a thought is. No scientist knows what a thought, what is, does it exist as molecules? Nobody knows what a thought is.

And that's still the level of form, thought. So the essence of who you are cannot be defined just as the space around you cannot be defined. It has no boundary.

It's absolutely mysterious. You cannot know it in the sense that you know something in this world. You can only become aware of it by unknowing, by letting go of all that you know for a moment and just be conscious and realize you can be conscious of something, which is normal for everybody.

You're conscious of perception, and so on, but you can also be conscious of being conscious. And that is the transcendent dimension. And that at first people may not understand what it is that these words are pointing to.

Be conscious of being conscious. Sounds like some kind of duality, but that's only because we're using language. Now, as you know, as I've often pointed out, life or your life could be compared to a dream.

Things happen and then they evaporate. When you get towards the end of your life, it may begin to look more and more like a dream when you think back. And of course, a real dream, when you wake up in the morning, it dissolves and you say it was just a dream.

Many philosophers have argued about whether what you experience as your life is real or it's a dream. It's a question of perspective, of course. But it does have a very strong dream-like quality.

Or if you want to use modern terminology, it's your movie, the movie of your life. Some movies are very dramatic with lots of sound and fury, to use the words of Shakespeare, Shakespeare, full of sound and fury. And then Shakespeare adds signifying nothing.

Or another expression, Shakespeare's actually a play, much ado about nothing. And that's many people's lives. And it may not be until you reach the end of your life that you realize that most of it was really, you got upset about nothing much.

It's better not to wait until the end of your life to realize that you often still get upset about nothing much, the movie, that's all. So is your life real? Yes and no.

Is it a dream? Depends how you look at it. It certainly is dream-like.

Is this moment really happening or am I just imagining it? Am I imagining that I'm looking at the screen and somebody's talking to me and saying, are you dreaming? You just don't know.

What you do know is that this is what you are experiencing at this moment. It is being experienced. And a prerequisite for this, so that it can be experienced, whether it's a dream or not, is what we could call the light of consciousness.

Without consciousness, there could be no dream or no experience. So the one thing you know without any doubt is that you are conscious. And even that is not absolutely right when we put it like that.

Let's put it differently. The one thing that you know without any doubt is not that you are conscious because there's, again, a duality. I am conscious as if we're conscious with something added onto you.

No. The one thing that you know beyond any doubt is that you are consciousness or the light of consciousness, like the light of the sun, the light of consciousness. And in that light of consciousness, things come and go, arise and subside.

The good day, the bad day, the wedding, the divorce, or the death of your partner or your husband or your wife, the birth, the death. But all this happens, appears and then disappears. It appears in the light of consciousness.

And that's you. So you are not the form that happens. You're not really the dream or the experience.

You are the space for it, the light in which it happens, space or light, whatever you want to call it. They're just words. And that is the liberating, the great liberation, knowing yourself as the space of the light, as the consciousness.

And you can sense that at this very moment. What is it that makes this moment possible? What makes it possible for you to have the experience of this moment, whatever happens in this moment, the light of consciousness?

Presence. You suddenly become aware that you are aware or that there's awareness, the arising of self-awareness. And that is traditionally in spiritual language terminology, it means that is the real meaning of knowing yourself.

In ancient Greece, already the dictum, know thyself. On a more superficial level, knowing yourself is knowing what makes up the conditioning of your personality and having some knowledge of ways in which you operate in daily life. And that already is something good.

There needs to be some awareness so that you become aware of your own patterns. But

you're still aware of something. And then at a deeper level, knowing yourself is knowing yourself as consciousness, as the space.

And that is essence knowledge. You can actually get this feeling of your essence. It's not yours, but temporarily just, let's call it yours.

You can get the sense of the essence of who you are. The essence of your identity is nothing that can be defined. It's formless.

It also has nothing to do with time. It's timeless. The challenge comes is whether there can be an awareness of essence, the essence awareness in your life, even when things happen.

Not just at this moment, but when you have to go back into your normal daily life and you start doing things, dealing with situations, working on the computer, making a phone call, doing your shopping, driving. Can you be there perceiving everything, speaking, and yet not lose that essence awareness in the background of your life? And that's an amazing challenge.

And that's an amazing achievement, which is traditionally called liberation or enlightenment. And I believe that really Jesus was talking about that when he used the term salvation. So there are different ways one can speak of it or point to it.

Can you feel, can you sense a certain spaciousness in you? Even when you make a phone call to talk to your accountant. Now you might say, no, I can't.

I lose it every time. And that may be true that you lost it many times, but I don't think it is true when you say you cannot. What does happen when you lose that awareness of depth within you, that awareness of awareness, what does happen when you lose it is because you thought that something else was more important than your inner state.

Something else was more important than awakening, spiritual awakening. You actually thought your conversation with the accountant or whoever it is is more important than what is the destiny of you as a human being, which is to flower, to be an expression of the flowering of consciousness. So you think all the little things in your life are more important than that in the moment that they happen.

Or you say, oh, let me first deal with that and then I'll be spiritual. But of course, there's no end to dealing with that. Life gives you one damn thing after another to deal with.

So peace, of course, is not an outer condition. You cannot find it out there. It's something that arises and that is intrinsically one with the transcendent dimension.

And then you don't get drawn into drama anymore because out there things still happen. And then you may notice that the transcendent dimension and the awareness is always

there when there is a little gap between two thoughts. It's always there when there's a certain spaciousness, even while you're thinking, excuse me, so you no longer have one thought after another.

You have a thought and a little space, another thought and a little space. For example, whenever you're listening to somebody, you're not thinking. That's part of the practice of spaciousness.

You're listening. There's just an alert listening. You're looking at something.

There's an alert visual perception or an alertness behind the visual perception. That means you're there as the spaciousness. Then you begin to talk.

Then you move into form. And you can still sense the spaciousness in the background. And then you stop speaking.

And the spaciousness, the alert awareness comes again into the foreground. So when you use your mind and you or you become active, do things, the spaciousness recedes, still you can sense it somewhere. And then very often you find moments of brief stillness, could just be three seconds.

And then immediately, the awareness or you as you suddenly, the person in that moment, the person momentarily dissolves. And what arises instead is conscious presence. Then you come back into form.

Another thought comes, you speak, you do things. The awareness right goes into the background. The person operates again, but not disconnected anymore from the dimension of awareness.

So it's a very strange way. It's a totally new way. This is why it's a leap.

It's a leap in an evolutionary leap in consciousness. It's a totally new way of living. So that you are only temporarily a person, even on a normal day.

You're the person and then you are the awareness. And even when you're the person, you're still connected to the essence of yourself as conscious awareness. So you continuously appear and disappear, so to speak, as a person.

So imagine many human beings living in that state of consciousness. And of course you are, one could say, without making it into some kind of egoic belief. Of course, you are at the forefront of this evolutionary leap, not you as a person.

It happens because the person has become transparent to it. The person has made room for it. It comes through the person, but it's nothing to do with the person.

It's not the person. So in that way, of course, a totally different world would arise as

more humans live in that way. But we don't need to be concerned about that.

We just need to be concerned about awakening, the absolute importance of awakening in our own life, in your own life. As you know, there is no such thing as your life. We just call it that.

So let's just, just one briefly drift was one example, just to recapitulate on the essence of what I said here, and what hopefully you verify in your own experience. Let's say you're going to make a phone call. There's a phone.

And about something requiring some information, having to deal with some problem, whatever it is. So there's a phone. You're still for a moment, 10 seconds, whatever, alert, still.

Anybody can spare 10 seconds, five seconds. And then you pick up the phone. And while it rings, you're still, there's just an aware presence, an alert, aware presence.

Then the person answers at the other end. And then you begin to speak. And then the alert presence recedes.

And then the mind begins to operate. And you speak. The person has come in.

Then you're waiting for an answer. You have just said something to that other person at the other end. And the reply is going to come.

And as the reply comes, the alertness suddenly is there fully again. And so you just listen in that state of alertness, which means the person recedes, temporarily dissolves, and you're just there as an aware presence. Then you find yourself speaking again.

The person is back. The awareness recedes into the background, but it's still, you can still sense it there. And this means you are speaking from the level of awareness, which means you're speaking much more intelligently and more effectively without creating conflict out of nothing, because all conflict is out of nothing, ultimately.

So the way in which the situation is handled is very different now, because you're not there exclusively as the person. Because if you're there exclusively as a person, that's the ego, of course. Ego means you only know yourself as the person.

You are completely identified with that conditioning that creates the person. And so that's the phone call. Just I gave that as an example of how you're in a situation where there's form, speaking, thinking, doing, and there is the deeper dimension of formlessness.

And that's a dance. So that's very exciting because to master that dance between the form and formlessness, that's the purpose of your life. No matter what else you do, that whatever you do is a vehicle for that.

In itself, it's not important at all, but it is a vehicle for something that is important. All the stuff that you think is important may be relatively important, but it is not absolutely important. Only one thing is of absolute importance, and that's consciousness, the arising of consciousness.

And of course, when the consciousness arises, it also transforms the relative. So I wish you well. And let's see how the dance goes for you between the relative and the absolute, between the person and the transcendent essence.

[Speaker 10] (8:11:38 - 8:11:39)

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (8:12:54 - 8:13:35)

So our special guest is someone whose books have changed countless people's lives all over the world. And his name is Neil Donald Walsh, and he's here to join me here and now. Thank you so much for coming.

[Speaker 3] (8:13:35 - 8:13:39)

Oh, thanks for having me. I'm totally in love with you.

[Speaker 1] (8:13:45 - 8:14:52)

I'd like to, of course, I don't need to, everybody's aware of his books. And I also saw the movie, *Conversations with God*, if you haven't seen it, it's based on a very faithful history of your life at that period when you're beginning to write. And it's wonderful to watch.

Now, in a little while, I want to ask you what your message to the world is right now. But before we do that, I'd like to ask you a little bit about the creative process in you, especially at the very beginning, because not everybody, or not many people may be aware that in the period before the first book came through you, *Conversations with God*, you were homeless. Is that right?

[Speaker 3] (8:14:53 - 8:14:53)

Yes.

[Speaker 1] (8:14:53 - 8:15:41)

And you were living in a tent. And that is shown in the movie. And so it was a time period when all the structures around you that most people would consider necessary, they would think, I need security so that I can write.

I need... And of course, that's not the case. It happened to you when there was complete insecurity and the structures around you had collapsed.

I would say there is a connection between this enormous creative impulse suddenly coming through you and the prior collapse of the external structures around you.

[Speaker 3] (8:15:41 - 8:21:35)

How do you see that? Well, Eckhart, that's my experience as well in the following sense. But let me back up.

Let me just take one step back, may I please. I didn't set out to write a book. So I wasn't thinking in terms of having a creative moment or producing a book.

That didn't happen, actually producing a book with foreknowledge that it would be a book. Or that it would ever be seen by anybody until what became book three. So books, what are popularly known as books one and two in the Conversations with God cosmology were not written with any foreknowledge that anyone would ever see it without ever any intent that it would be published as a book.

It was a process of personal revelation, personal connection. And it was a process as well as, excuse me, a personal expiation. That is, I was ridding myself of all the thoughts I had about how I thought life was.

Because it began, really the process of my Conversation with God began when I realized that nothing in my life was working the way I thought it was supposed to work. My relationships with my significant other was falling apart. And with all of my others, my life work had come to a grinding halt.

I was doing nothing. I was on the street, unemployed, and I had a broken neck. I should explain that why I was on the street was that I had a car accident in which I broke my neck.

And very few people really survive a broken neck, or at least survive it intact. I'm very fortunate that I'm still alive, very fortunate that I'm not paralyzed, frankly. But I was one of the very rare people who can actually have a broken neck and be more or less normal afterward.

Except that for about two years, I couldn't do much. I couldn't lift this. I was not allowed to extend my arm.

So I couldn't do very, very little because they were wanting me to be very careful with this skeletal structure of mine. So I could do nothing. And I wound up on the street because the social welfare system fell out from beneath me.

So now, there I am finally sitting, and I had too much pride, by the way, to ask people who love me for help. That was interesting. I had a thought about it that I'm going to look bad.

How could I look any worse than I looked? But I had to. I didn't want to call my father.

He would have rushed to my aid, but I didn't want him to know that I was... I thought, well, I'll be out of this in just a few weeks. I can pull myself out of it.

Well, a few weeks turned into a few months, and a few months turned into a year, two weeks shy of one year that I was on the street asking people for dimes and dollars. Could you give me a quarter? Could you help?

And then I became so upset with myself. And so I began to ask myself because I finally got a job and I finally got off the street. But this is when the game got interesting.

Am I telling too much of this now? No, no, it's wonderful to hear. It was when I got off the street, when I finally managed to find a little weekend job as a radio announcer that I earned a few dollars, enough dollars to get off the street that I wound up back in the game, back in the game of life, back in the drama.

And that's when I realized the utter vacuousness of life. I thought, is this really all there is? Is this, am I back in it?

And for what? It doesn't, none of it made any sense to me. I felt like I was on another planet.

I didn't understand why do we bother? And so I woke up one night and I said to myself, what does it take to make life work? What is this life?

What's going on here? What is really going on here? And I asked the eternal questions that we all ask.

Why am I here? And who am I? And how did I get to this place?

And to what? You know, and I really begged God, my perception of God. I just begged for an answer, as many of us have done.

And God was good to me. She said, do you really want answers to all of these questions or are you just venting? I said, you know, I really would, I really would, I really would like answers if you've got them, you know, give them to me because at this point I'm really searching.

So, and so this voice, I heard a voice, Eckhart, over my right shoulder that began, and it was as clear and as present. It was a physical voice. It was not a voice inside my head.

It was a voice I heard audibly in the room, right next to me, such that I turned around to see who was in the room. It's 4.15 in the morning. I had gotten up in the middle of the night to just pacing back and forth, trying to, and then I sat down and I thought, you know, I was hearing things, but I thought, fair enough.

I'm going to write down, it happened to be, there happened to be a yellow legal pad on the table in front of me. And I picked it up just to, just to write down what I was hearing.

[Speaker 1] (8:21:35 - 8:21:38)

It's funny. I write everything on yellow legal pads.

[Speaker 3] (8:21:46 - 8:28:30)

Why am I not surprised by that? So, and I began to ask questions. Who am I?

What does it take to make life work? What is it that I don't understand? Help me, just help me.

Mind you, I wasn't a young person at this time. I was 50 years old and I thought, gosh, a half century. I've been here a half century and I don't understand what's going on.

Very not okay. So I was given, this information began flowing through me and I began writing. And I began asking questions because what I was writing, as I was, I want to say, by the way, that the voice very quickly moved into my head.

It left this physical realm and became a part of my inner experience. But I began hearing and I began writing everything that I was hearing. And of course, what I was hearing was bringing up other questions in me.

How could that be? I don't understand. I was always taught this.

I was always told that. How can that be? And I remember when I really got clear that I was talking to my, what I call my conceptualization of God, because I was, we were talking about the 10 Commandments and I said, I said, you know, I began writing questions and getting answers or writing questions, questioning what I was writing.

And at one point I asked, you know, I tried so hard to live a good life. I've obeyed the rules. Some of the rules.

Hardly none of the rules, but the point is I tried. I tried really, you know, and I, and I, so I said to God, I said, you know, and I was being very sincere. I said, you know, I tried to follow the 10 Commandments and the golden rule and the rest.

What does it take? God said, actually, Neil, there's no such thing as the 10 Commandments. Oh, well, that was just the bedrock of my entire life.

How, then what, then what are there? And from then, I knew that I had connected with some place of grander awareness that I call God just for a convenient short word, but a place of grander awareness that I'm clear resides in all of us. And that I want to say, if I could dare say it, not only that resides in all of us, but that is the identity of all of us, that

all of us are, that we, that, and I, and I sat there and I thought, my gosh, I'm not just hearing from that.

I am that. That's who I am. And all of the rest of this is, I'm making it up.

I'm making it all up. So I began to continue this dialogue. And at one point, this other part of me, which I would now call it that, that I call God said, this will one day become a book.

And I'm just writing, journaling, by the way, this had gone on now for a couple of weeks. Every, every night at 4.15 in the morning, I was awakened. Like someone was pulling me by the, you know, by the shirt front, getting me back to this thing.

And so I was in my little one room cottage that I had managed to rent after getting a job, finally, a part-time job. And I'm every morning at 4.15 in the morning, I'm up, I'm up, I'm writing more and more and more. And at one point the dialogue said, this will one day become a book.

And you know, my first thought, of course, is yeah, right. You and a hundred other people are going to send your middle of the night, mental meanderings to a publisher who's going to say, let's get this out at once. Guy is talking to God.

But in fact, you know what? I sent it to a publisher and I've been asked many times, many times, why did you send that off to a publisher if you didn't intend for it to be a book? And I tell you, I did it, Eckhart, so that I could prove something to myself, because I thought really the truth is, without being funny about it, the odds of something like that being published were one in a gazillion.

And I thought, you know, it says this will be a book. That was the only measurable outcome I had received in all the downloads I was receiving. Everything else was conceptual, theoretical in nature.

But here was something that could be measured. It would either be a book or it wouldn't be a book. So I thought, you know, I'm going to test God.

So I sent it to a publisher just to see what would happen and let it go. And within not too long a time, I got a call from one of the publishers that I sent it to. I sent it to five.

I got rejection letters, predictably from everybody except this last person sent me a rejection letter and it said, no, you know, this book doesn't fit our titles list. I sent it back to the publisher and I said, would you at least read it? Because I know that it fits your titles list.

All you publish are books like this. So I sent it back to the publisher and he took another look at it. Actually, he looked at it for the first time.

His acquisitions editor had turned it down. He looked at it and he said, we're going to publish this. And they did, you know, and the rest is, as they say in the business, publishing history, you know, the book actually was rushed to print.

It sold seven and a half million copies in 37 languages. And it was on that crazy New York Times list for 137 weeks consecutively. And suddenly there I am, the guy who's supposed to be talking to God.

So you ask how the creative process works. It wasn't for me a process where I sat down to see how could I create a series of bestselling books. For me, it was an internal experience of my soul meeting my mind and blending with my essence to become one.

And then my mind giving itself permission to just shut the hell up. And I mean that literally, I mean, shut the hell up and just get out of the way so that my soul could join my mind in a collaborative expression of who I really am. And what is really true.

So that's how the process worked for me. And I'm sure you're sorry you asked a two second question to get a 24 minute answer, but that's how it happened.

[Speaker 1] (8:28:31 - 8:29:04)

And very helpful to hear for everybody. And it's very inspiring to hear. Because of course, the dimension that you described, as you said, is in everyone.

And basically the human being is one with that dimension. Is that in essence? Just another question to you.

Then after that, do you feel that dimension is still in you? Do you still access that when you write nowadays?

[Speaker 3] (8:29:04 - 8:34:11)

Or how does that? I don't write unless I can. My writing, I mean, I write a newsletter or a little piece for the blog or things.

But I don't write that kind of material unless I can come from that place. I don't try to get to that place. I try real hard to put this.

The answer to your question is yes. Why am I using all these words? The answer to your question is yes.

But what I want to say is, I think it's possible. I have learned that it's possible for me to deliberately access that place. And I think that everyone can deliberately access that place of knownness, nothingness, that place where thought recedes and wisdom emerges from the soul.

I use words that my conceptualizations allow me to understand. So I go to that place of the soul and I just get very quiet. And you know what happens to me sometimes when I'm writing?

My friends who are around me know this. I'll be sitting there writing from that place and literally fall asleep at the keyboard. I will literally be writing for maybe six or seven minutes and then I'll sleep for 10 or 12 minutes.

And then I'll wake up and realize, this just happened to me the other day. Again, it happens all the time. Not because the effort is so great, not because I'm so exhausted, but because I'm so completely out of my body, so completely out of my physicality, so completely in another place that literally I just, and I'm out of there.

And then I kind of come back and I continue to, but I think that, I don't suggest you do this while you're driving or at the dinner table, but sometimes when you're alone, it's possible to just let go of every idea you ever had and just go to that place. And I do it with a request. But you know what?

I want to ask you a question. Let me just finish that thought. So they're not, well, what does he mean by that?

I do it with a request. And the request is, dear God, if there's something that wants to come through me now, that wants to emerge and present itself now, I'm open, allow it to, and it doesn't have to. If it doesn't, that's fine.

Then I just don't write this morning. I don't have a need to just, and then the impulse will come through. Literally an idea or a thought that will just come through.

And I'll find myself following that thought almost like I'm being led by the nose. I don't have a thought about the thought. It's just whatever.

And the thing writes, I was saying to my dear wife, Em, when I finished my last book, when everything changes, change everything, I walked upstairs with it and I said, I didn't have any idea when I started this, what it was going to say. No idea at all. No outline.

Sounds familiar. No outline. No thought.

I know what chapter one will be about this and chapter two will be about that. It'd be a logical progression. And no, I had no idea.

And then out came all of this stuff, the mechanics of the mind, the system of the soul that was astonishing me as I saw it. I was just, wow, what is that? And then, okay.

And then it would reveal itself and reveal itself and reveal itself. So I have to, I've had to turn back my last 20 or 30 royalty checks out of confessions. I didn't write it at all.

No, I didn't really. I kept the money. But I almost have to, you know, I almost have to do it with my hand.

You know, I can't, I have to take it like this way. I can't look at the person directly because I didn't really. But you know, it's that way with all gifts.

In truth, the gifts of life, it seems to us, come through us, not from us. And as do the joys, you know, whether it's a royalty check or a smile on a person's face or a squeeze or a hug or whatever it is. It feels to me like all the joys of life come to us just as freely as the gifts come through us.

If we just allow ourselves to get caught in the flow and get our self out of the way, get any thought out of the way that you think you're doing it. Oh, I'm reading, I'm a wonderful writer. Watch this.

Because whenever I, and I do have those thoughts, mind you. I want to confess, I have those thoughts. I'm a great writer, but this is gonna be a great book.

And it turns out to be crap. And I gotta throw it away. So, okay, great, I got it.

So, but I wanted to ask a question. What the hell was the question?

[Speaker 1] (8:34:12 - 8:34:14)

Well, very often questions dissolve.

[Speaker 10] (8:34:14 - 8:34:15)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (8:34:20 - 8:38:34)

Either they are answered or they dissolve. I know what the question is. Thank you.

This has bought me 10 seconds. I have long wanted to know, once I got in touch with the, please forgive me, I cry at my own stuff. I've wanted to know, what is the purpose if I'm not this body?

By the way, one of the first things I was told in conversations with God is you're not your body. Your body is something you have. It's not something you are.

Now it's got to be old news, but 15 years ago, that was brand new for me. Okay, I'm not my body. Then God said, you're not your mind.

Okay, not my body, not my mind. Then God said, you're not even what you think of as your soul. You're not even that.

That's another idea you have, that you are your soul. Okay, great. I said, then who am I?

God said, isn't that an interesting question? Why don't you tell me? And I said to God, no, no, you know the answer.

And God said to me, no, no, you know the answer. And I said to God, no, I'm really coming to you to tell me. And God says, no, no, I'm really coming to you to tell me.

What God said to me was the difficulty here, Neil, is that you are convinced that you and I are separate, that you're something other than me. Only when you're clear that you are nothing other than me will you understand that I don't have your answer. You have your answer.

But you may be whatever you choose to be. You may have whatever you choose to have. You may do whatever you choose to do.

Such is the wonder and the glory of life that you may create all of it as you wish. And so I thought, wow, but why? That was the question I asked.

If I'm none of all of this and all these things are happening to me in the exterior world and the events, the tragedies of life, of life in general out there in my own life, why, why, why must it be so hard? Why must it be so difficult? What am I doing here?

And God said, being me. For me, the answer that I got, Eckhart, was the answer to the eternal question why was you exist in your present form that I might know myself through you and through all of life. And so I got that the opportunity for me was to let go of all my prior thoughts about who I am and why I'm here and actually make it up, decide.

If I wanted truly to be my conceptualization of divinity, what would that look like? If I wanted to really be in this exact moment when I came up here to say hello to you, if I was really being who I wanted to be, expressing what I really am, I'd go and I'd give that guy the greatest, biggest smooch on the face he ever had. And I thought, dare I do that?

You know, Neil Donald Walsh doesn't smooch Eckhart Tolle. That's crazy. Because I have these concepts, you know, that you're not supposed to.

But I thought, you know, I got up to this guy and I felt his energy. I felt your wonderful energy come out. I thought, you know what?

I'm going to give you a smooch. I'm glad you did. Because that was what was arising, to use your words.

And so that really is the answer to the question why? Why? So that life might know itself as life itself through the process of life itself.

That you might demonstrate through the living of your life what life is. And if you don't like what it is-ness, change it. You're at liberty to change it.

And that was the greatest experience.

[Speaker 1] (8:38:44 - 8:39:04)

Thank you. Very inspiring to listen to you. So even when you speak, you're connected with that level, that dimension within yourself.

It speaks through you. And that's inspired speaking. It's not prepared.

It just comes.

[Speaker 3] (8:39:04 - 8:44:27)

Yeah, except when it's not, you know, across the breakfast table. I try, the greatest challenge of my life is to access that level of awareness in the day-to-day of my life. Yes.

I find for some reason that if I'm talking to people, or I want to say presenting, or doing a television interview or whatever, that somehow I'm able to step aside from my need for it to go well, be right, look good. You know, somehow or another, I just let go of that. I'm not sure I know how, but I just do.

I remember Matt Lauer on the Today Show asked me a stunning question. He did a little interview with me, you know, and he asked me this question. They always do this, you know, when you have 30 seconds left.

He said, Neil, we have about 30 seconds left, but could you tell us if God had one thing that he could say to the world, what would it be? He said, could you get it down to one paragraph? I said, actually, Matt, I could give it to you in five words.

He said, really? So he kind of turned to the camera, you know, a little bit of a smile on his face. Ladies and gentlemen, from Neil Donald Walsh, here's God's message to the world in five words.

You've got me all wrong. So, if that's true, of course, we have a lot to talk about. We have a lot of fun to explore, a lot to say, why did I start?

Why did I even tell you that? Where was I going just before that? Huh?

No, I asked the question why. There's more than that. Wrong.

You're out. You're out. But anyway, thank you, thank you, day-to-day life.

My challenge is to somehow, when I am, I'm disattached, I'm more attached in private than I am in public. I'm more attached over the breakfast table with my beloved to my

idea, how it should be and who I am and, you know, how could you have said that to me just now, and do you understand, you know, all this, than I am in public. So I do have a question, you were right after all, you can stay.

I do have a question for you. This is a terribly personal question and we can edit this out of the tape if you don't want it in the program, but I want to know whether, because I want to tell you, and I'm not pumping sunshine into your ear, this is the truth for me. You have stood for me as close as I have come to see on this planet as a living master, who understands, but who does more than understand, because to be honest with you, I think I understand.

But the difference I see between you and me, to be honest and totally transparent is, we both understand it, we can both say it really well, but he lives it and I don't, except when I do. What I notice is that I live at probably 20, who can give a number, not enough of the time, and when I'm with my beloved, with my family, in private, I somehow get into all of my, you know, thoughts, and I forget what I'm saying right here to you, as if I didn't even say it, to the point where my loved ones look at me sometimes and say, you ought to read one of your own books, and it's well deserved, it's well deserved.

So I've come to you for a personal counseling session on television, how do I take what I think that I am, how do I take what I've experienced, I'm going to not even say what I think I am, because it's out of thought, it's not from thought, how do I take what I experience myself to be, and wash the canvas of my life with it, especially when it matters to me the most. In the end, honestly, I don't really care how it is with you, I'll never see any of you again, that's the truth. But that lady sitting over there, my wife, I see her every day, every hour, why can't I summon this, then?

[Speaker 1] (8:44:37 - 8:45:12)

First of all, in certain situations, the presence is there fully in you and comes through you, such as here, you know that, in a so-called teaching situation or writing situation, the presence moves through you, and then there's the rest of your life, and it is sometimes there, I would assume, and sometimes not, is that right, or is it mostly not?

[Speaker 3] (8:45:13 - 8:45:22)

I think it's more there now than it used to be, but it's still the majority of time not, and people who know me would tell you that, they'd say, you think this is a nice person, you should work for him.

[Speaker 1] (8:45:26 - 8:47:42)

So all it means is your mind still takes over, and either you relinquish it voluntarily in your daily life, which requires the minimum of awareness that this is what's happening right now, my mind has taken over, but I believe that you do have that, it comes in

sometimes that you realize that your mind has taken over, and in that moment you can relinquish that and invite presence into your life, and whenever any conflict situation arises or any kind of suffering arises, irritation, anger, whatever it is, then it can be used as an alarm clock to tell you, oh, something has happened here, I sometimes say it's an alarm clock that tells you, I've lost the present moment, I'm not present in the now, so in other words, you are trapped in your mind, so you can use any conflict situation and the moment you notice it, you can invite presence back into your life and so immediately the alertness comes back, it's a voluntary death, if you don't do it, you'll need more suffering and then it'll happen, but if you voluntarily relinquish, because you know how it works, you know how it works because you experience what you do in a situation like this, there's that complete openness, you're not identified with old mind, your mind is simply a servant of the deeper awareness, as you speak to us, it's beautiful, you're not here, you're not protecting your ego, which is a wonderful thing, and because there is one thing much vaster here, speaking through you than the limited ego that still arises in your daily life, so as you sit here, the ego is not operating, otherwise you would have to hide the fact that you don't live it in your daily life, but something much greater than the ego is speaking through you right now.

[Speaker 3] (8:47:43 - 8:47:46)

You think he's going to miss a chance to talk to Eckhart Tolle about this, you're crazy.

[Speaker 1] (8:47:50 - 8:48:59)

So all it, alertness, be more interested in your inner state in any given situation than what's happening in the outer situation, what's happening inside me at this moment, what is my inner state at this moment is always primary, dealing with external situations, whatever happens, the outcome of this situation or that situation, or this person agrees with me or does not agree with me, all these are secondary things, if you can shift your attention primarily to what's going on inside me right now, nothing is more important than your state of consciousness now, it's not the external world is never more important than your state of consciousness, but one loses sense of that and you believe that some external situation is more important than your consciousness, your state of consciousness, it's not, that's the illusion, but the world is here to seduce us into believing that because it's very seductive, every situation.

[Speaker 3] (8:49:00 - 8:51:29)

And I think I've, I think I've discovered the reason why, you know, when you say things like the world is here to, it's very seductive, it's here to seduce us, the thinking mind, and God bless it, it does have some purposes in our lives, the thinking mind says, why? Why would God, if there is a God or, you know, why would life create a world that is very seductive and that is constantly seducing us moment by moment into thinking that we are our thoughts and to stop, and I, what I got when I asked God that question and when

I was reconnected with just a moment ago when you talked about the alarm clock was, wouldn't it be interesting, my theory is, my viewpoint is, that the world in fact creates these moments of seduction, you know what, we need to write a book together called Moments of Seduction. You always come up with wonderful titles. So I think that the world creates these moments of seduction precisely to provide us a contextual field within which we can experience ourselves at the next grandest level to express our understanding and our awareness of who we are in the next grandest version of the greatest idea we ever held about that.

And what I notice is that yes, to be really honest with you, the number of times that this is true for me in my personal life are less now than they were before, and less than they were before that. But they're also becoming increasingly intensive and more challenging. Anybody get that in your life?

That they're more challenging and more intensive, even though they may be less, because we're rising in consciousness and the world creates a contextual field that says, you want to show us that next step of who you are? Watch this. Here comes a person walking down the hallway who's going to really challenge you.

If that's who you imagine yourself to be, not to make it a bad day for us, but in fact to make it a good day for us. To give us the next opportunity for God to demonstrate who and what it really is in us, through us, and as us. That's my thought about it.

Thank you. Because the alarm clock, when you said it's an alarm clock that goes off, that's what got me to remember it. That's right.

Of course, it's just life waking life up to life itself. And pulling us out of the dream. Okay, well.

[Speaker 1] (8:51:30 - 8:51:32)

Consciousness has answered.

[Speaker 3] (8:51:34 - 8:51:38)

Yeah. So now I did what I came here to do.

[Speaker 1] (8:51:43 - 8:51:45)

Let's have a moment of stillness.

[Speaker 4] (8:55:32 - 8:55:55)

My question to you is, in the book, The Secret, it's based on the law of attraction, where you attract everything into your life. Whereas your book, The Power of Now, is being in the moment and letting the universe guide your life. So I just want to know your

thoughts on that, on the difference.

Thank you.

[Speaker 1] (8:56:11 - 9:00:16)

Well, as we can see, if we look around, the universe, or life, creates life forms everywhere, wherever we look. So the universe loves to create form, it seems. It can also create form through the human form.

Humans can create as they do. And humans are not separate from the totality of the universe, so there isn't human creation and the universe creating. It's all one.

It's the totality. We are the universe. You are the universe.

So when you create, or when I create something externally, whatever it is, any structure that you build from simple thing, building something, or using your mind, your thoughts, to help in the act of creation, to create something on the mental level, before it becomes physical form. That's a way in which the universe can create through the human form. One could almost say indirectly, or secondary creation.

You may have heard the expression, we become co-creators with God. Your question is really, is it up to us to initiate the act of creation, or should we simply rest in presence and then see what happens? The foundation, of course, for creation is resting in presence.

That's the very foundation, because resting in presence, that is, touching the source of, true source of creativity, and the true source of fulfillment or satisfaction, which is not form, but the formless life itself. It is essentially fulfilling to sense the timeless presence that we could call I am, to sense that directly in yourself, not as an object in your awareness, but as yourself. It's a self-realization of consciousness, not a subject-object realization.

And that is essentially happiness, if we want to use that word, aliveness, fulfillment. That is essentially your identity, your true identity, which has no form. That's why the Buddhists say there is no self, self in the sense of anything that you consider yourself that has form, a psychological or physical form, is not who you are.

The essential self, which the Buddhists deny and just call emptiness, or which in India is called the Atman, that is the formless, and that's the very basis. If you go into, if you create before having consciously realized the source of creation, then you belong to all that.